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**REVIEW**

OF THE

**CORRESPONDENCE**

BETWEEN THE

**HON. JOHN ADAMS,**

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

AND THE LATE

**WM. CUNNINGHAM, ESQ.**

BEGINNING IN 1803, AND ENDING IN 1812.

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BY TIMOTHY PICKERING.

SALEM:

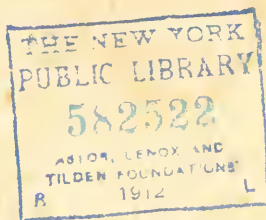
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**B**E IT REMEMBERED, That on the seventh day of May, A. D. 1824, and in the 48th year of the Independence of the United States of America, Cushing & Appleton, of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, to wit :

"A Review of the Correspondence between the Hon. John Adams, late President of the United States, and the late William Cunningham, Esq. beginning in 1803 and ending in 1812. By Timothy Pickering."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" and also to an act, entitled, "An Act, supplementary to an act, entitled, "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving and etching historical and other prints."

JOHN W. DAVIS,

*Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

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1912



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✂ The recurrence of Mr. Adams to the same topics, in various parts of his Correspondence, and the arrangements of the principal subjects, in this Review, have occasioned some repetitions of the same facts and remarks.



## ERRATA.

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- 5. Line 10, for *slandered* read *reproached*.
- 21. Strike out the marks of parenthesis, in the 11th and 13th lines from the bottom.
- 29. Line 19, from the top, insert *of* before Louisiana.
- 39. Line 13, from the bottom, insert *if* before *insincere*.
- 166. Line 3, from the top, strike out *the* before rank.



## INTRODUCTION.

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A PAMPHLET of more than two hundred pages has appeared, under the title of "CORRESPONDENCE between the Hon. John Adams, late President of the United States, and the late William Cunningham, Esq. beginning in 1803, and ending in 1812."

A family connexion appears to have had some influence to induce Mr. Adams to unbosom himself to Mr. Cunningham. In one of his letters he tells us, that Cunningham's grandmother was the beloved sister of his mother. Two objects were obtained by Mr. Adams's disclosures: He gratified the keen appetite of his friend for secret history, and eased his own mind, by giving vent to his spleen against some public men whom he hated.

Mr. Adams, roused at length by his subject, and stimulated by the constant flatteries of his friend, resolves to write his own history; because, says he, "no human being but myself can do me justice;—*and I shall not be believed.* All I can say will be imputed to vanity and self love." In the progress of this Review, the reader will find these prophetic anticipations verified. He will see, from the numerous aberrations of Mr. Adams, that his statements are not entitled to belief; while every page is characterized by his vanity and self-love.

In performing the task which Mr. Adams has imposed on me, I shall be obliged to take a pretty extensive view of his character; and present some features in the characters of others whom he has introduced in-

to his letters. In these he has been pleased to give me a conspicuous place; making me a standing theme of reproach. But although so many of his shafts have been levelled at me, from his full quiver he has shot many at others; especially at one who, by way of eminence, may be justly styled *THE FEDERALIST*. Federalists generally, perhaps almost universally, were once the friends of Mr. Adams; and they continued such, so long and so far as his public conduct permitted them to support him, consistently with their views of what the public welfare required. The mere abatement of their zeal wounded his pride, excited his resentment, and exposed them to his reproach.

For myself, I determined on a formal vindication; aware, at the same time, of the labour it would cost me, in looking for and examining numerous documents, written and printed, of many years' standing. Accusations, which a page would comprise, might require a volume to refute. But Mr. Adams's calumnies are spread over many pages, and will bring into view a variety of topics for reflection.

The letters of Mr. Adams present a tissue of misrepresentations, perverse constructions, and unfounded assertions. The latter, in any other case, I might designate by a harsher term. While under the influence of his passions strongly agitated (and a little excitement, like a small match to a mass of gunpowder, is sufficient to produce an explosion) he may not be perfectly qualified to distinguish between truth and falsehood. *Suspicions*, the offspring of a proud and jealous mind, are substituted for *facts*, and on these chimeras he rests confident assertions. But heedless precipitation is itself criminal; and its consequences may be as injurious to the party accused, as deliberate falsehood.

By many persons, forgetting the latter years of his life, and thinking only of his revolutionary services, Mr. Adams is hailed as "great and good;" and is now familiarly designated by the flattering title of "the venerable sage of Quincy." I am as ready as any man to acknowledge—I have, not long since, before a very nu-



merous assembly, acknowledged—Mr. Adams's merit in contributing largely to the vindication of the rights of the Colonies, and in effecting the independence of the United States: it was an act of justice, which I feel no disposition to retract. But “great men are not always wise;” and some, after many good deeds, commit inexcusable faults; and, whether these injuriously affect one's country, or individual citizens, they ought to be exposed; for the public welfare, in one case; and, in the other, to rescue individuals from the effects of undeserved reproach.

In analyzing the “Correspondence,” and some other letters of Mr. Adams written at the same period, it will be seen with what facility, and how little truth, he could represent facts and occurrences concerning persons who were the objects of his hatred. This may serve to put on their guard readers of all his productions, whether already written, or which may hereafter appear, during his life, or after his death. Of the latter, I doubt not he has made ample preparation. The present examination will demonstrate, that when the interest of himself or of any member of his family is involved, or his vanity and ambition have room to operate, or meet with checks and obstacles, little reliance can be placed on his statements. If ingenuity or charity can find an apology for him—and that will be a bad one—it will be, that his selfish and ungoverned passions blind him.

Mr. Adams's virulent reproaches of federalists, of Hamilton and of me in particular, seem to have been written when he was tortured with the keen feelings of disappointed ambition (feelings which, after the lapse of eight years, since he failed of a re-election to the presidency, recurred in full force)—an ambition which could bear no opposition, or even lukewarmness, in regard to the means of gratifying it. He has himself described this passion in language that would not have occurred to any man who had not felt it in its utmost violence. “The desire of the esteem of others,” says he, “is as real a want of nature, as hunger—and the

*“neglect and contempt of the world, as severe a pain as the gout or the stone.”\**

Of Mr. JEFFERSON I should have said nothing beyond what appeared in Mr. Adams's own writings; and that, merely to contrast his different representations, to show their inconsistency, and that his course of conduct was directed exclusively by his views of existing interests of himself and family. But Mr. Jefferson's letter to Mr. Adams, of October 12th, 1823, published in the Boston Patriot in December, and thence introduced into other papers to be spread through the Union (for every letter from the pens of these two gentlemen is eagerly circulated in the public prints) appeared to me calculated to lead the readers into a misconception of their characters, and of the relations in which they stand towards each other. That letter, therefore, with its connexions, will demand some notice.

What is history? A mere detail of events may engage curiosity; but it is the characters of the actors which especially interest the reader; and the exhibition of their actions, whether these be good or bad, which furnishes useful lessons of instruction. Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson were conspicuous actors in the period of our revolution, and received applause. Future historians will investigate their characters, and by their actions regulate the award of censure and of praise, for the information and warning of those who shall live after them. But, seeing they have at one time done deeds worthy of remembrance, why drag their faults and failings before the eyes of their countrymen, many of whom, without inquiry, seem now inclined to forget and forgive? Let a celebrated ancient give the answer: “In this, I apprehend, consists the chief part of the historian's duty: It is his, to rejudge the conduct of men, that generous actions may be snatched from oblivion, and the authors of pernicious counsels, and the perpetrators of evil deeds, may see, beforehand, the infamy that awaits them at the

\* Discourses on Davila, No. 4; ascribed to Mr. Adams as the author.

“tribunal of posterity.”\* The occasion calls on me to make some contributions for this object. Hence this Review will be extended, and assume, in some degree, the shape of historical memoirs. With respect to Mr. Adams, the truths I state may, without much difficulty, gain admittance; for, by his own account, he has few friends among those denominated federalists; and still fewer among his old enemies, the adherents of Mr. Jefferson.†

Of all the persons vilified and slandered by Mr. Adams, Mr. Jefferson is the only one to whom he appears to have been solicitous to make reparation. But was he the only one entitled to it? Do his eulogists think nothing due to the memories of Hamilton and Ames and other departed federalists, and to their surviving compatriots, who have been calumniated by the

\* Tacitus, Annals, iii, Murphy’s translation. These ideas are compressed in the original: *Præcipuum munus annalium reor, ne virtutes sileantur, utque pravis dictis factisque ex posteritate et infamia metus sit.*

† In March, 1809, a short time prior to the election of governor and senators of Massachusetts, two democrats of Northampton addressed a flattering letter to Mr. Adams, requesting him to express his opinion respecting the present circumstances of the nation, with regard to foreign powers and domestic parties. On the 20th of that month, Mr. Adams sends an answer, in which he gives a dialogue, which he says passed in Holland, in 1784, between himself and Deodati, minister of the Elector of Saxony. Deodati overwhelms him with compliments; ascribing to him the glory of having made his countrymen and their government Republican; that he had made his country very celebrated; that he had made it independent; that he had made an astonishing treaty with Holland, and a marvellous peace with England, and made her acknowledge our independence. Mr. Adams tells Deodati, that he is too polite; that he had no pretensions to have performed all those great achievements; that he had acted a part in some of those affairs. Deodati then predicts, that his fate would be the same with all the ancient republicans, Aristides, Phocion, Miltiades, Scipio, &c. &c. To which Mr. Adams answers, “I believe it.” Deodati goes on: “You will experience ingratitude, injustice;”—“You will be ill-treated, hated, despised, persecuted.” Mr. Adams answers, “I have no doubt of all that: it is in the ordinary nature and course of things.” Mr. Adams then proceeds to say, that a curious coalition of French and English emissaries, with Federal and Republican Libellers, had so completely fulfilled the prophecy of Deodati, and his own forebodings—so totally destroyed his reputation by their calumnies—that he had then neither power nor influence to do any thing for his country. The last paragraph of his letter is particularly characteristic, and is in these words:

“I always consider the whole nation as my children; but they have almost all proved undutiful to me. You two gentlemen are almost the only ones, out of my own house, who have for a long time, and I thank you for it, expressed a filial affection for

JOHN ADAMS.”

Adams family? Are their names to be blotted from history, or remembered only to be associated with infamy? The "Correspondence" demands a full examination. As far as present circumstances require, I will examine it; and make an essay to do justice to the parties whose names Mr. Adams has introduced, and made the subjects of his reproaches or of his praise. Of the latter, the number is small indeed; principally himself—his son J. Q. Adams—his son-in-law Col. William S. Smith deceased, and Elbridge Gerry, also deceased.

A just defence of myself and others, the subjects of Mr. Adams's bitter calumnies, compels me to expose his numerous aberrations, and to state some necessary truths. Truth is the soul of history. To ascertain some facts, my testimony may be useful. The value of that testimony will depend on the estimate formed of my character by my contemporaries. On that footing I am willing it should rest.

By introducing a few sentences in Latin, I do not desire to impose on the reader an idea of literature, to which I make no pretensions; but when a passage suited to my subject occasionally falls in my way, I take the liberty to use it. All I claim to possess is, some portion of common sense, and some force in argument; and knowledge enough of my mother tongue, to exhibit facts, reasonings and reflections, in a plain and perspicuous style, so that my meaning can be easily understood. To scurrilities I have been subjected through a large portion of my life: these I have despised. But when assailed in any point of morals, I have offered a vindication, or have caused the libellers to be prosecuted. This was a duty which I owed not to myself only, but to the great number of respectable men who have honoured me with their friendship. Some of these have been pleased to say, that I owed it to my country, in whose service so large a portion of my life has been employed. The first suit, was against one Dr. Reynolds, of Philadelphia. The case was clear, to the satisfaction of the Supreme Court; and so the cause was committed to the jury. Eleven of these were



agreed; but one, a democrat, persevered in withholding his assent; and the jury was dismissed. On the second trial, there were two democrats on the jury—and a verdict not obtained. Reynolds's counsel then observed to mine, that his client was "a poor devil," without property; and that if I should persevere, and finally obtain a verdict for damages, it would not operate as a punishment on the libeller; but if I would drop the suit, he would make him muster money enough to pay the costs. The suit was dropped. One Baptiste Irvine, editor of a paper in Baltimore, published a libel against me. I brought an action against him: he published a recantation, and I forgave him. Libelled once in a newspaper in my native town, the printer was indicted, convicted, fined and imprisoned. I was then absent, attending a session in Congress. Libelled once more in my native county, the libeller was prosecuted. He made his confession, which was entered on the records of the court; and I forgave him. The last prosecution was of a printer in New-Hampshire. He also humbled himself—published his recantation—and was forgiven.

Doubtless there were many other libellous publications, which never came to my knowledge.

Once I was hung in effigy in the Northern Liberties of Philadelphia, on a gallows fifty feet high; and a printed notice of the time was sent to me, then in Congress at Washington. This was during the existence of President Jefferson's glorious, indefinite embargo; of which I had taken the liberty to say, *that I did not like it*. On receiving the notice, the first thought that occurred to me was, that the effigy of one of the greatest and best men the United States ever knew, John Jay, had been exhibited, a public spectacle, in the same manner, and I believe in the same place; and, so associated, I felt myself honoured by the elevation.

I close these introductory observations with one remark on the principal subject of this Review—

## JOHN ADAMS.

No man, perhaps, has ever suffered more from disappointed ambition and mortified vanity, than Mr. Adams; for in no man, I believe, were those passions ever more highly sublimated. At the first organization of the general government, he complained (so it has been, and I doubt not truly, stated) because the votes of the electors were not unanimous for him as well as for Washington.\* At that time, (some readers may need to be informed) before the Constitution was *altered*, in the first term of Mr. Jefferson's presidency (specially, perhaps, for his accommodation, prior to another election) the candidates for the offices of President and Vice-President were not respectively designated in the electoral votes; but he who had the greatest number, if a majority of the whole, was to be the President; and he who had the next greatest number was to be the Vice-President. And in case more than one had such majority, and an equal number of votes, then the House of Representatives, voting by states (that is, the representation from each state having one vote) were immediately to choose, by ballot, one of them for President. Under this provision of the Constitution, Mr. Adams might hope, if the votes for him and Washington had been equal (and from his complaint that they were not, it is pretty evident that he expected it) to have obtained the preference, by the choice of the house; leaving to Washington the honour of being his "lieutenant." At any rate, he would have contemplated the fact with great complacency, that the people, acting by their electors, held him in equal honour with Washington. From his education as a lawyer, and his learned investigations of what concerned civil rule, he probably thought himself entitled to a preference. But Mr. Adams has admitted and repeated a TRUTH, *too well known*, that "KNOWLEDGE is by no means necessarily connected with WISDOM OR VIRTUE."†

\* Washington had all the votes—69: Adams, 34.

† Defence of the American Constitutions of Government, vol. i, Letter 29.

# REVIEW.

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## SECTION I.

### *THOMAS JEFFERSON.*

THE first letter in the "Correspondence" is from Mr. Adams, dated Nov. 28, 1803, near three years after his rival, Mr. Jefferson, had intercepted him in his second march towards the President's chair. In this letter, Mr. Adams acknowledges the receipt of an oration of Cunningham's, and of a "brochure,"\* in which this friend ascribes to Mr. Jefferson the authorship of a pamphlet entitled "Thoughts on Government, in a letter from a gentleman to his friend." Mr. Adams says he was himself the author, and that it had been published with his name; but, from the quotation of his correspondent, "suspects that some rascal had reprinted it, and imputed it to the name of Mr. Jefferson."

In his next letter, dated January 16, 1804, Mr. Adams returns to Cunningham a newspaper, in which, with a poignant sneer, he says, "My poor 'Thoughts on Government' are wickedly and libellously imputed to 'the greatest man in America!'"—"libellously," because (such appears to be the obvious implication) his own views of government were, probably, so different from Mr. Jefferson's theories. In the same letter, Mr. Adams, in replying to Cunningham's request to be furnished with information concerning Jefferson, communicates the sentiments I shall presently introduce.

Mr. Jefferson, in his letter of October 12th. 1823. ac-

\* A pamphlet.

knowledges the receipt of one from Mr. Adams, dated September 18th, which was a few days after his Correspondence with Cunningham had been published in Boston. This letter, no doubt, was written to apologize to Mr. Jefferson for the pointed reproaches he had uttered against him, in his confidential letters to Cunningham. On the 12th of the next month, Mr. Jefferson writes a consolatory answer to Mr. Adams; assuring him of his "unabated and constant attachment, friendship and respect." But Jefferson had not then seen the Correspondence. "I had for some time," says he, "observed, in the public papers, dark hints and "mysterious innuendoes of a correspondence of yours "with a friend to whom you had opened your bosom "without reserve, and which was to be made public by "that friend or his representative; and now it is said "to be actually published. It has not yet reached us, "but extracts have been given, and such as seemed "most likely to draw a curtain of separation between "you and myself." Mr. Jefferson then exclaims with "indignation against the author of this outrage on private correspondence." This indignation is doubtless the echo of Mr. Adams's expression of resentment against Cunningham's son, the publisher of the Correspondence. But Mr. Adams, in his apologetical letter, did not tell Mr. Jefferson, that, although the present publication was "an outrage on private correspondence," yet it was, in fact, only an *anticipation* of a year or two—perhaps of a few months only—of the publication of the same correspondence, with his (Adams's) permission: for the injunction of secrecy was limited to his own life. His words are, "I shall insist that whatever I write to you upon the subject shall be confidential *as long as I live*."\* It is true, the *subject* here directly referred to was his removing me from office; but his details on that act, and his libels on my character, pervade the whole correspondence. Besides, why should Cunningham, the publisher, be more tender of Mr. Jefferson's character than of mine? The latter

\* Letter, Nov. 7, 1803.



was not less dear to me, my family and friends, than his to his family and adherents; and the humble talents I possessed were for as many years devoted to the service of my country: whether as faithfully, I am willing to submit to Mr. Jefferson's own decision.

On the 10th of January, 1804, Cunningham informs Mr. Adams, that "he had for some time been collecting materials to present the public with a full view of the character and conduct of Mr. Jefferson;" and asks Mr. Adams to furnish him with "some particulars—interesting incidents in Mr. Jefferson's career;" at the same time telling him, that he had been informed, "that such a work was preparing by Mr. Coleman of New-York, under the eye of Hamilton;" which might induce him to relinquish it. In his answer of the 16th of the same month, Mr. Adams says, "I would not advise you to relinquish the project you have in hand, because another has the same. If the two persons you name are engaged in such a work, you may depend upon it no good will come of it." Why? Mr. Adams subjoins the reason: "There will be so many little passions and weak prejudices, so little candour and sincerity in it, that the dullest reader will see through it." That is, "Hamilton has always been Jefferson's opponent and enemy; and whatever he says to Jefferson's disadvantage, will be ascribed to his resentments, and will not be believed; whereas, whatever you shall state, as an impartial observer, will *stick: hærebit lateri lethalis arundo.*"\*

Then, in compliance with Cunningham's request for information concerning Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Adams freely makes the following contribution: "He [Jefferson] always professed great friendship for me, even when, as it now appears, he was countenancing Freneau, Bache, Duane and Callender."—"Anecdotes from my memory would certainly be known. There are some there known only to him and me; but they would not be believed, or at least they would be said not to be believed, and would be imputed to envy, revenge,

\* The fatal shaft will fasten in his side.

“or vanity. I wish him no ill. I envy him not. I *shudder at the calamities which I fear his conduct is preparing for his country ; from* A MEAN THIRST OF POPULARITY, AN INORDINATE AMBITION, *and a want of* SINCERITY.” In this paragraph there is a clear implication, that some of the anecdotes which he *could* recite would present such ill favoured features of Jefferson, and such fair ones of himself, that they would be imputed, by Mr. Jefferson’s friends, to envy, revenge, or vanity.

In the same letter of January 10th, Cunningham says, “I wish to discover every arcanum that would be of use to develop the true character of the Salt-Mountain Philosopher. This mountain has increased the wonders of the world to eight ; and if Mr. Jefferson would sink a tomb in a part of it for himself, it might, better than being a mummy, preserve his body and memory through succeeding ages.” This pointed ridicule of his old and nearly half-century friend, Mr. Adams doubtless enjoyed : certainly it received no rebuke.

If the “venerable and illustrious sages” of Monticello and Montezillo\* are ever to be reconciled, and confer and receive mutual forgiveness, there is no time to be lost. The latter, being eighty-eight years old, and “now trembling on the verge of the grave ;” and the former, an “octogenarian,” waiting impatiently “for the friendly hand of death to rid him at once of all his heavy hours.”

Mr. Jefferson, in his letter to Mr. Adams, is pleased to suggest, that whatever alienation between them

\* It has been the practice, in European states, for gentlemen to give particular names to their *villas*, or seats of residence in the country. This has been imitated in America : and in Virginia, and other states where there are not divisions of territory smaller than counties, it may have been found convenient. But in New-England, where counties are divided into small townships, and each distinguished by a *legal* and *well known name*, to give other names to small spots of a few acres, or to a farm, within a township, is preposterous, and worse than useless. Yet Mr. Adams has (to use a word of Mr. Jefferson’s) *belittled* himself, by lately giving to the place of his residence in Quincy (a post-town too) the name of Montezillo—Little Mount. Whether this was the effect of vanity, or a humble imitation of his friend elevated on the top of Monticello, I do not undertake to decide.

had ever taken place, was to be ascribed to tale-bearers; "filling our ears," says he, "with malignant falsehoods; by dressing up hideous phantoms of their own creation, presenting them to you under my name, to me under yours, and endeavouring to instil into our minds things concerning each other, the most destitute of truth." But who has not heard of the libels on President Adams (not omitting Washington) in the pamphlet called "The Prospect before Us," written by Callender, under the countenance, patronage and pay of Mr. Jefferson? of which libels Callender was convicted by a jury at Richmond; for which he was fined and imprisoned; and for which he received (as he had a good right to expect) President Jefferson's pardon.\* The patronage and pay were evidenced by two letters from Jefferson to Callender, which, after they had quarrelled, Callender put into the hands of Augustine Davis, Esq. of Richmond. From Davis they went into the hands of a very respectable citizen of Virginia, from whom I received them. Both were in Mr. Jefferson's own hand writing, to me perfectly well known. Even the hand writing of Davis, on the backs of the letters, noting his receipt of them from Callender, was known to me, in consequence of an official correspondence, of more than three years, when Davis was the post-master in Richmond, and I postmaster general.

*Extract of a letter, dated Monticello, Sept. 6, '99, from Thomas Jefferson to Mr. Callender.*

"SIR,

"By a want of arrangement in a neighboring post-office during the absence of the post-master, my letters and papers for two posts back were detained. I suppose it was owing to this that your letter tho' dated Aug. 10, did not get to my hand till the last day of the month, since which this is the first day I can through the post-office acknowledge the receipt of it. Mr. Jefferson† happens to be here and directs his agent to call on you with this & pay you 50 dollars, on account of the book you are about to publish. When it shall be out be so good as to send me 2 or 3 copies, & the rest only when I shall ask for them."

\* See the Appendix for some of the libellous passages in Callender's book.

† George Jefferson, nephew to Thomas Jefferson.



The next paragraph has no relation to "the book;" and the letter concludes with these words:

"with every wish for your welfare, I am,  
with great regard, Sir,  
your most obedt. servt.

"MR. CALLENDER"  
at the foot of the second page.

TH: JEFFERSON."

The other letter is dated Monticello, Oct. 6, '99. The first line acknowledges the receipt of a letter from Callender of September 29, and concludes with these words:

"I thank you for the *proof sheets* you inclosed me: such papers cannot fail to produce the best effect. they inform the thinking part of the nation; and these again supported by the tax gatherers as their vouchers set the people to rights. you will know from whom this comes without a signature: the omission of which has been rendered almost habitual with me by the curiosity of the post-offices. indeed a period is now approaching during which I shall discontinue writing letters as much as possible, knowing that every snare will be used to get hold of what may be perverted in the eyes of the public.  
Adieu."

This is addressed to  
"MR. JAMES THOMPSON CALLENDER,  
Richmond "\*"

And on the back of each letter were these words, in the hand-writing of Mr. Davis:

"Given by M. Callender to Aug. Davis."

There can be no room for an apology for Mr. Jefferson, in paying "fifty dollars on account of the book," on the ground that he might not know its contents; for by the second letter it appears that Callender sent him the proof sheets, and that he approved of their contents; "such papers," says he, "cannot fail to produce the best effect:" that is, Callender's book, "The Prospect before Us," by its slanders on Washington and Adams, and on the whole federal party, would poison the minds of many well intentioned people, inflame the passions

\* Perhaps the reader will notice some singularities in the above extracts from Mr. Jefferson's letters: he writes *acknolege* for *acknowledge*, and begins his sentences (excepting the first word in a paragraph) with *small* instead of *capital* letters. It is his fashion in all his manuscripts that have fallen under my observation.

of the democrats, and, by the aid of the whiskey and other internal taxes, (always disagreeable to the *multitude*) thin the federal ranks, give victory at the pending election to democracy, and to Mr. Jefferson the long contemplated object of his "inordinate ambition," the presidency of the United States.

This whole *Callender affair*, although no trial in our courts was of more notoriety, Mr. Adams has been willing to forget, since his son, John Quincy Adams, in 1807, fully enlisted himself under the banners of President Jefferson. Callender was convicted under what has been called the *sedition law*; a law enacted in Mr. Adams's presidency, and for its duration limited to that term. One of its objects—for it embraced other subjects—was to protect *him* from the torrents of calumny pouring upon him from all the streams of democracy. It was a law more abused than understood. While it provided for the punishment of *slanders*—who are always *liars* (such being the import of the word)—it gave protection to honest, *truth-telling* men, in criminal prosecutions, for alleged libels on the President of the United States; by authorizing them to give in evidence the truth of the facts alleged, for their justification.

In his letter No. X, dated Sept. 27, 1808, Mr. Adams enumerates various acts of Mr. Jefferson's administration, which he reprobates; as, the repeal of the judiciary law, which Mr. Adams says he "always believed to be a violation of the constitution;" "the repeal of the taxes," so necessary to provide defences against foreign dangers, and to diminish the national debt; and "the removals of so many of the best men, and the appointments of so many of the worst."

Even legislative acts, in Mr. Jefferson's administration, may be ascribed to him: for he had acquired such an astonishing ascendancy with his party, (though it would puzzle any impartial inquirer to find a reason for it) that the manifestation of his wishes was sufficient powerfully to influence, if not to determine, the passing of a law. And this gentleman has been spending his last

breath, and some of the remaining rays of his glimmering lamp, in attempting to destroy the independence of the judiciary—our surest defence against tyranny—by depriving the judges of the only safe tenure of their office, “during good behaviour;” and rendering them, at short periods, absolutely dependent on the executive for reappointment; and, thenceforward, his degraded, miserable, corrupt tools. Were this pernicious project to obtain, we should no longer be governed by *certain laws*, but by the *varying passions of our rulers*. Had this been our judiciary system when Mr. Jefferson was president, he would have hurled from the bench chief-justice Marshall, because he did not hang Aaron Burr; although judging with the wisdom and purity of Hale, and the integrity, ability and firmness of Holt.

It is in his letter of July 2, 1822, to lieutenant governor Barry of Kentucky, that we have seen broached these dangerous ideas. It is a letter which ought to be preserved, as a characteristic memorial of a personage so much celebrated as Mr. Jefferson.\* The Supreme Court of the United States, with the independence essential to a due administration of justice, had given some decisions adverse to the pretensions and acts of certain individual states—to restrain them within the limits of the constitution, of which that court is the rightful interpreter: and if the national legislature, or the legislatures of individual states, overleap its boundaries, that court is the only Constitutional Power which can bring them back. Yet this is the power which Mr. Jefferson would destroy. “Let,” says he, “the future appointment of judges be for four or six years, and renewable by the President and Senate:”—that is, at the pleasure of one man, the President, who would or would not re-nominate the judges, according to their decisions on questions affecting himself, his friends, his party, his caprice, or his visionary notions; and thus destroy the only Power whose acts can be relied on—in the highest degree to which any human institution can be entitled to confidence—as most uniformly regulated by REASON.

\* It will be found in the Appendix.

It deserves notice, that when Mr. Jefferson wrote his letter to lieut. governor Barry, of the seven judges then on the bench of the Supreme Court, five had received their appointments from Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison, from their own party. The judges Marshall and Washington received their appointments from Mr. Adams, in his better days—when he was himself a federalist. Yet these democratic judges, according to Mr. Jefferson, were, by their judicial decisions, on solemn argument, violating the constitution, and annihilating State Rights! No; the obvious solution of their proceedings is this: Feeling their independence of party; and, like all other men, when not under the bias of personal interest, disposed to do justice; and knowing that their reputation and future fame—to which none are indifferent—will rest on the *purity* as well as the *ability* of their decisions; they will, by their enlightened and impartial adjudications, satisfy their consciences, enjoy a present reward in the approbation of their fellow citizens, and transmit their names with honour to posterity. This is the Power, and the Only Power, which can present a check to the National Legislature, whenever its acts shall transcend the limits of the Constitution; which was intended to bridle the curvetings of Congress, as well as the floundering of State Legislatures; assemblies which, like individual rulers, feeling Power, may sometimes forget Right.—This is the Power which may decide, in the last resort, the important question now agitated, with great zeal and ability, in the House of Representatives, on the making of roads and canals, by the authority of the General Government; a measure warmly advocated by some, and as warmly opposed by others, of that National Assembly. Should it be enacted, any citizen whose property shall be touched by the national road or canal, by instituting an action against the national agent, may bring the question before the Supreme Court; and if that Court pronounces the act unconstitutional, that Power which holds the purse and the sword—the power so much dreaded, in anticipation,



by Patrick Henry and some other distinguished citizens—must *stop*. For I am not willing to believe that Congress, disregarding the Court's decision, would by physical force carry the act into execution; but would resort to the mode prescribed by the Constitution, for obtaining, by its amendment, the desired power. But it is this *moral power* in the Supreme Court, the power of REASON over brute force, which Mr. Jefferson would destroy. Every four or six years, he would "bring their conduct under revision" of the President and Senate; and renew their appointments, or eject them from the Bench, as their decisions should quadrate with, or oppose, the views, interests or passions of the President and Senate for the time being: and one of the Court's decisions giving offence, might be the denial of the power of Congress to make national roads and canals. Yet this is the ORACLE to which one of the able opposers of the existing bill appeals, and by the force of whose name, he hopes to influence the opinions of at least some members of the house, to reject the bill: and if one half of the eminence, which, in the gentleman's eloquent eulogy, is ascribed to Mr. Jefferson, were his due, his opinion, in all cases, would be entitled to much respect. "Against this power of the general government, to make internal improvements, by means of roads and canals, under any part of the Constitution, Mr. Stevenson said he would bring the sanction of a high name in the annals of our Political History, the authority of a man whose principles had been as uniformly steadfast as republican, and whose virtues were as pure as his genius was splendid; a man who had justly been considered as the 'Apostle of Liberty.' It was unnecessary to say that he alluded to Thomas Jefferson." His message to Congress, Dec. 2, 1806, is then referred to. It is the same celebrated message in which Mr. Jefferson casts about him to know what to do with the *surpluses* of the public revenue soon to be accumulated in the National Treasury; and suggests the idea of expending them "for the purposes of public

“education, roads, rivers, canals, and such other objects of public improvement, as it may be thought proper to add to the constitutional enumeration of federal powers.” Mr. Jefferson adds, “I suppose an amendment to the constitution, by the consent of the states, necessary; because the objects now recommended are not among those enumerated in the constitution, and to which it permits the public moneys to be applied.” His immediate successor, however, instead of being perplexed to find objects on which to expend Mr. Jefferson’s *surpluses*, was obliged to study to find expedients to supply *deficiencies*; and actually to borrow some millions of dollars.

But to return to the topic of *mutual forgiveness*, of which the two distinguished gentlemen of whom I am speaking appear so anxious to make a public exhibition—What is its character? The apologetical letter of Mr. Adams would afford some information; but it is not published, and I presume never will be: *unmutilated*, it would be a curiosity. Did he confess that the sentiments he once entertained and expressed of Mr. Jefferson were erroneous? that he believed Mr. Jefferson never contemplated nor carried any measures injurious to his country? that he was not chargeable with a “mean thirst of popularity,” nor an “inordinate ambition,” nor “a want of sincerity?” and that he possessed no anecdotes which if made known would be disreputable to Mr. Jefferson? And will Mr. Jefferson say, that he never countenanced Freneau, Bache, Duane and Callender, in writing and publishing their slanders against Mr. Adams, in order, by diminishing his popularity, to prevent his re-election to the presidency? Will Mr. Jefferson go one step further, and say, that he did not, when Secretary of State, patronize, and in effect set up, the National Gazette, edited by Philip Freneau, a translating clerk\* in his office; the whole tendency of which—and thence we have a right to say its design—was to undermine the administration of Wash-

\* An imperfect translator too, though qualified to edit such a gazette. This, unsustained by a sufficient subscription, died an early death.



ington, conducted, as it always was, on federal principles? principles to which Mr. Adams was attached, and on the expected adherence to which his single election to the presidency was obtained. Or, the facts being considered as unquestionable, will Mr. Jefferson now admit that he sinned against Washington, and Adams, and the federal system of government, and truth, in the countenance he gave to those licentious libellers of them all? When these two gentlemen shall make these avowals and confessions, we may, in the exercise of abounding charity, ascribe their mutual forgivings to a temper becoming Christian penitence—*an act not lightly pressing on persons whose accounts are so near being closed.*

In reviewing the "Correspondence," the reproaches uttered by Mr. Adams against Mr. Jefferson would, indeed, have found a place, for the necessary purpose of contrasting them with the subsequent expressions of friendship, respect and praise; the latter drawn from him, or rather *volunteered*, in consequence of the new political situation of his son, in Mr. Jefferson's corps. I should not, however, have made a single animadversion on Mr. Jefferson, but for the appearance of his letter of October 12, in exculpation, not of Mr. Adams only, but of himself; apologizing for their mutual heart-burnings and ill will, by ascribing them to a cause, plausible indeed, and wrought up with no little ingenuity, and wanting only truth and fact for its basis. He insinuates that tale-bearers have produced all the mischief: but he speaks guardedly—"there *might* not be wanting those who wished to make it"—their political opposition—"a personal one, by filling their ears with malignant falsehoods:" and that the "whispers" of these people might make them forget what they "had known of each other for so many years, and years of so much trial." Then, as an experienced philosopher, he closes the solution of their difference by a remark, just in itself, and proper, if it were applicable to the case of himself and Mr. Adams. "All men," he says, "who have attended to the workings

“of the human mind, who have seen the false colours under which passion sometimes dresses the actions and motives of others, have seen also those passions, in subsiding with time and reflection, dissipating like mists before the rising sun, and restoring to us the sight of all things in their true shape and colours.” Very handsomely spoken indeed. But will Mr. Jefferson say that the opinion he now entertains of Mr. Adams materially differs from that he entertained from the year 1796 to 1801? If, during that period, dark mists were thrown around Mr. Adams, did not Mr. Jefferson contribute to raise them? If they were *malignant vapours*, were they not generated by the men whom he patronized, and at least one of whom he paid (as we have seen) for that very purpose? Were those men some of the mischievous go-betweens, whose “whispers” made two old friends “forget what they had known of each other for so many years?” Mr. Adams, however, during that period, seems not to have supposed, that those libellers were the agents of Mr. Jefferson. His constant professions of friendship had laid Mr. Adams’s suspicions asleep. The discovery of the truth justified his branding Mr. Jefferson with “a want of sincerity.”

To use such means to outstrip his competitor, and rise to the supreme power, was to the last degree dishonourable; and, joined to his affectation of distinguished love for the people, (to be manifested by a repeal of the internal taxes, in order to ease their burthens) or, to use his own *cant*—“not to take from the mouth of labour the bread it has earned”—the practice of such means, and of such artifices, justly subjected Mr. Jefferson to another of Mr. Adams’s charges—“a mean thirst of popularity.” And the evidences of these two, support the third charge—“his inordinate ambition.”

Mr. Adams will not thank me for the pains I have here taken to justify him before the public for uttering those reproachful charges against Mr. Jefferson: for, in his letter of apology, he may have taken them all

back, together with every thing else in the "Correspondence" which could give offence to his half century friend, the "patriarch" of republicans—*lest they should have an inauspicious influence on the fortunes of his son.*

After all, what is there in Mr. Jefferson's letter, of October 12th, to entitle him to *the honour of a triumph*—by some few so liberally decreed? Suppose Mr. Adams's accusations well founded—as every intelligent reader, and all others acquainted with the affairs of the United States during the last twenty four years, may justly be inclined to believe—and *suppose Mr. Jefferson to be conscious of their truth*; did it require any great stretch of charity to forgive his friend and fellow—"patriarch,"

"Now at his feet submissive in distress,"

and suing for pardon? and when freely to grant it would present the idea of *his own innocence* and of *Mr. Adams's guilt*? for if not guilty, why make apologies, or sue for pardon? And while Mr. Adams's situation bears not the most honourable aspect, that of his friend is singularly happy; it exhibits the loveliness of innocence, the calmness of philosophy, and the meek, forgiving temper of Christianity.

But in what originated Mr. Adams's solicitude so promptly to apologize, in order to prevent, or soften, the displeasure of his old friend? Certainly not the belief that all his reproaches were unfounded. It was, as above suggested, the apprehension of the effect of the "Correspondence," made public prematurely—before the time which he had himself assigned for its publication—and when he had not contemplated a crisis like the present. It was a moment of *high family concern*. His son, who, by deserting his and his father's former friends, and joining their enemies, had risen anew to place and power—a boon which he saw was no longer attainable if he continued in their ranks, and persevered in their principles—was now a candidate for the highest object of republican ambition—the presidency of the United States. This elevation would

depend on his standing well with the great dominant party, of which Mr. Jefferson, originally the leader, was still, though not officially, yet in public estimation, the political head. Under these circumstances, Mr. Adams hastens to make apologies and atonement to Mr. Jefferson, for the *just reproaches*, or the *foul slanders*—they must be one or the other—which he had uttered against him. Mr. Adams may avow either, as will best comport with his knowledge, his conscience, or his family interest. His choice will not change my opinion, nor the opinions of the distinguished citizens still living, who have observed the course of public affairs, and of those who have conducted them, for the last three or four and twenty years.

In letter No. IV, January 10, 1804, Cunningham (as before observed) requests information concerning Mr. Jefferson, supposing “no man living had so thorough a knowledge of his transactions as Mr. Adams.” In his answer of the 16th of the same month, Mr. Adams says, “You are mistaken when you say that ‘no man living has so much knowledge of Mr. Jefferson’s transactions as myself.’ *In truth I know but little concerning him.*” Then, giving some details, showing how small had been the intercourse between them, he adds, “Although we agreed always very well, *there was no very close intimacy between us.*” Now observe the contrast. A little more than five years afterwards—when his son John Quincy Adams (having before devoted himself to Mr. Jefferson, and continuing in full favour with his successor, Mr. Madison) had been nominated minister plenipotentiary to Russia—Mr. Adams was capable of making the following declaration: “I sought and obtained an interview with Mr. Jefferson.\* *With this gentleman I had lived on terms of*” “INTIMATE FRIENDSHIP *for five and twenty years, had*” “acted with him in dangerous times and arduous conflicts, and always found him assiduous, laborious, and” “as far as I could judge, upright and faithful.”† And

\* This refers to affairs of 1797; Mr. Jefferson being then Vice-President.

† Mr. Adams’s letter No. xiii, dated May 29, 1809, in the Boston Patriot.



farther on, Mr. Adams says, "I will not take leave of Mr. Jefferson in this place, without declaring my opinion, that the accusations against him, of blind devotion to France, of hostility to England, of hatred to commerce, of partiality and duplicity in his late negotiations with the belligerent powers, are without foundation." In the progress of this Review, the reader will learn how to estimate any of Mr. Adams's opinions, in cases where the interests of himself or of his son may be affected. I accord with Mr. Adams thus far—that Mr. Jefferson's devotion to France was not a *blind* devotion. The elucidation of this remark will appear, when I describe his Embargo, and the support of it by John Q. Adams.

So anxious has been Mr. Adams to conciliate the good will of Mr. Jefferson (for the persuasive reason I have mentioned) that he perverts the use of as plain words as any in our language. He has said (in one of his late published letters) that Mr. Jefferson and he were never *rivals*; but that Jefferson and Hamilton were rivals! Surely, every reader of English knows, *that they who contend for one common object are rivals*. The common object, for which Adams and Jefferson contended, was the Presidency. But Jefferson and Hamilton aimed to effect *different measures* in the administration of the government—and therefore were not *rivals*, but *antagonists*.

In noticing the extraordinary ascendancy acquired by Mr. Jefferson over the minds of his partisans and admirers, I remarked, that it would puzzle any one to account for it. And I ask, What evidences has he given to the world, of his being, what he seems generally reputed to be, a *profound philosopher*, and a *great statesman*? The former part of his character (which, by the way, has little to do with government) I leave with philosophers and men of science.\* Of the latter, every man of common sense is qualified to judge, from its practical effects. For the rule, "by their fruits ye shall know them," is alike applicable in politics as in

\* See Appendix, B.

morals. A list of the *beneficent acts* of his eight years' administration of the government of the United States is a *desideratum*. Those of a *contrary character* would rise to a large amount. But let us look back to earlier and more virtuous times. In the war of words with the mother country, antecedent to the war of arms, when every American, who could hold a pen, employed it in defending American Rights, it is natural to suppose that Mr. Jefferson's was not idle; and then, probably (though his political lucubrations may not have passed the bounds of Virginia) he gained the reputation of holding a good pen; to which Mr. Adams alludes in a letter to me, extracts from which will appear in the Appendix.\* But the performance for which Mr. Jefferson has been most distinguished, is the Declaration of Independence. This has been extravagantly eulogized, as if rising to a degree of excellence that not one of his cotemporaries had the power to reach. In my humble opinion, however, much of its merit is owing to the amendments made when reported to Congress, where one fourth of the whole was struck out, and some things (not many indeed) were introduced. In my letter to Mr. Adams, on this subject, I remarked, that the Declaration contained *few new ideas*. Mr. Adams, in his answer, says, *not one*; but he thinks the best parts were struck out. I shall give, in the Appendix,† a copy of Mr. Jefferson's draught of the Declaration, which I took some years ago from one in his own hand-writing; by the comparing of which with the Declaration as voted and proclaimed by Congress, every reader will be enabled to judge for himself.

But Mr. Jefferson added to the United States the rich and immense territory of Louisiana; thus extending their dominions from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean! Yes—the acquisition was effected in his presidency; and his merit in the case shall now be exhibited.

\* See Appendix, C.      † Appendix, D.



By the treaty of Oct. 27, 1795, between the United States and Spain, the King, assenting to the claim of the United States to the free navigation of the river Mississippi, from its source to the ocean, stipulated to permit the citizens of the United States, "for the space of three years, to deposite their merchandises and effects in the port of New-Orleans, and to export them from thence without paying any other duty than a fair price for the use of the stores;" and promised either to continue this permission, or to "assign to them, on another part of the banks of the Mississippi, an equivalent establishment." The benefit of this stipulation was enjoyed by our citizens until 1802, when the Spanish intendant at New-Orleans "occluded" (as Mr. Jefferson said)—shut them out, from this deposite, without assigning any equivalent establishment elsewhere. This violation of the treaty-stipulation was not to be endured; and, upon representations to the government of Spain, the place of deposite was restored. To whom this interruption of our right is to be ascribed, will presently be seen. I presume it was to prevent its recurrence, that Mr. Jefferson instructed his minister at Paris (the late Chancellor Livingston) to obtain, as I have understood, a cession of the isle or port of New-Orleans, or some part of the eastern bank of the Mississippi—that is, of West Florida, or of both—to the United States. It is not a little curious, that a negotiation for purchasing supposed *Spanish* territory should be carried on at Paris with the *French* government, instead of *Madrid*, with the government of *Spain*. In the same manner, when, at a subsequent period, Mr. Jefferson proposed to Congress the purchase of Florida, *the certain property of Spain*, the negotiation was instituted at *Paris*. The truth was, that France exercised a complete ascendancy over Spain, which was no longer a free agent. Godoy, the Prince of Peace, the favourite of the Queen, ruled Spain in the name of her weak King; and Godoy was Bonaparte's tool. The "occlusion" of the port of New-Orleans against American merchandise

and effects excited keen resentment in the United States ; and some were ready to send an armed force to occupy the port ; and the poor Spaniard was the subject of severe reproach. But I presume it was not then known, that the King of Spain had been, before that time (viz. on October 1, 1800) compelled to *re-convey* Louisiana to France. This fact exposes the secret of the interruption of our right of deposite at New-Orleans ; and it was against the *French* government that the indignation of the United States should have been excited, had the retrocession of Louisiana to France been known. The opening again of the port of New-Orleans arose from the circumstance, that Bonaparte was not prepared to take immediate possession of Louisiana. But the territory having been actually reconveyed to France accounts for the unsuccessful attempts of Mr. Livingston to obtain a cession of Orleans and part of the adjacent province of West Florida.

At length, during the short and feeble administration of the British government which succeeded Mr. Pitt's, a peace was negotiated at Amiens between Great-Britain and France. Bonaparte seized this interval to prepare a fleet and army to go and take possession of New-Orleans and the whole province of Louisiana. But the British government soon perceived, that it was, in effect, an *armistice*, rather than a *peace*, which had been concluded at Amiens ; and that the war must be renewed. And finding that Bonaparte was going to add the immense province of Louisiana—a new world—to the dominions of France, a British fleet was despatched to block up the ports (in Holland) where Bonaparte had assembled military forces, and ships to transport them to New-Orleans.

It was in this state of things that Bonaparte became willing to transfer to the United States—not the island of New-Orleans and part of the adjacent territory—but the whole province of Louisiana—the *whole* or *no part*. For he was justly apprehensive that, its retrocession to France being then known, Great-Britain

would send an adequate force, and take possession of it for herself. If therefore he could raise some millions of dollars by the sale of the province to the United States, the sum would be so much clear gain. Under these circumstances, the transfer to the United States was made, and (if I mistake not) rather pressed on our envoys, Chancellor Livingston and Mr. Monroe; and they agreed to receive it, stipulating the price at fifteen millions of dollars. They gave to Mr. King, American minister in London, information of the treaty; with which the British government, to whom he made known the transfer, was perfectly satisfied. And I recollect that when Alexander Baring (son-in-law to the late Mr. Bingham, and whom I had known in Philadelphia) came from England to Washington, to receive the six per cent. stock created to pay for this purchase, he told me, that the British government would sooner have paid the money stipulated for the purchase, than have suffered Louisiana to have become a province of France.

Thus, to British policy and interest are the United States indebted for the acquisition of Louisiana. And, if *gratitude* ever enters into the consideration of *nations*, we owe it to Britain, for that acquisition, as really as to France for her assistance in acquiring our independence. But on the score of *gratitude*, in these two cases, we are indebted neither to one nor to the other. Each of them acted *to serve her own interest exclusively*: France, to *diminish* the power of Britain by cutting off thirteen flourishing colonies; and Britain, to prevent an *accession* to the power of France in possessing the immense territory of Louisiana, *and a consequent control over all our Western States*, which depended on the Mississippi, and the rivers running into it, for the conveyance of their boundless products to a market. Yes, we owe it to the naval power of Britain, that Louisiana is not now a province of France. Bonaparte had already sent his prefect, Mr. Laussat, to New-Orleans, to receive possession; and he waited only for the arrival of the French fleet and army, to



take upon himself the administration of the government.\* Before I take leave of Louisiana, I will add a few observations.

At the close of the seven-years war, so disastrous to France, which was terminated by the peace of 1763, she ceded to Spain—apparently in consideration of the losses which the latter had sustained by being drawn into that war, towards its close, in aid of France—the province of Louisiana, westward of the river Mississippi, and the island of New-Orleans on its eastern side. The whole of Florida was ceded by France and Spain (each her part) to Great-Britain. In the course of the war of our revolution, France and Spain became once more engaged in a war with Great-Britain. Spain seized the occasion to possess herself of Florida; and, at the treaty of peace of 1783, Britain relinquished her right to it.

I entertain no doubt, that at that time the government of France contemplated the regaining Louisiana; and waited only for some favourable events to accomplish her purpose. It was unquestionably with this in view, that, in the negotiations at Paris, in 1782, for effecting a general peace, the French Minister represented to our Commissioners, authorized to treat of peace with Great-Britain, that they ought not to claim the country westward of the Allegany mountain, but to suffer it to go into the hands of Spain. Mr. Jay, however (for he was obliged for a while to act alone, though Dr. Franklin was also a commissioner) resisted all the French intrigues, as well at Paris as in London; and thus that country was secured to the United States. It was, unquestionably, with a view to this land-scheme, and some other plans injurious to the United States, that the French government exerted itself, and successfully, through its minister to the United States, la Luzerne, and the secretary of legation, Marbois, to obtain from Congress instructions to the American ministers for negotiating a peace with Great-Britain, wholly unworthy of the earlier firm, dignified and independent acts

\* See Appendix, F.

of that body. The commissioners were instructed "to undertake nothing in the negotiations for peace or truce, without the knowledge and concurrence of the ministers of the King of France, and ultimately to govern themselves by their advice and opinion." This appeared to Mr. Jay so dishonourable to the United States, and fraught with such evil consequences, that he laid the instruction aside, and, in his negotiations with the British minister, considered only what the important interests of his country required; and thus formed the basis of the treaty of peace, so highly advantageous to the United States.

In pursuance of our treaty of 1795, with Spain, commissioners were to be appointed to run the boundary line between the territory of the United States and Florida, from the river Mississippi to the Atlantic ocean. Andrew Ellicott was the commissioner on the part of the United States; and, with the requisite attendants, he repaired to the Natchez, the place designated in the treaty for the first meeting of the commissioners. From the time of his entering the Mississippi, after his descent by the Ohio, and coming to the first Spanish posts, and thence proceeding downwards towards the Natchez, there were mysterious appearances, suggesting the idea that delays and difficulties would be interposed, to prevent the running of the boundary line. The apprehensions of Mr. Ellicott were realized, after his arrival at the Natchez. He there received satisfactory information, that the governor in chief at New-Orleans, and the sub-governor (Gayoso) at the Natchez, in some private and confidential communications, had suffered the secret to escape them, That it was intended, by delays and evasions, to defeat the attempt, on the part of the United States, to run the boundary line, and the execution of the treaty, in what concerned that country. Mr. Ellicott states, that Governor Gayoso's original letter to a confidential friend, to that effect, had been in his hands. Accordingly, in the correspondence of this governor with Mr. Ellicott are seen a series of apologies, ex-



cuses, and empty professions, all contemptible; and offered in the face of treaty articles too plain to require a moment's hesitation as to their meaning. One of the articles stipulated the evacuation of the posts occupied by Spanish troops on the eastern bank of the Mississippi, within the known boundary of the United States. Of these the Spaniards still kept possession. All these occurrences are accounted for by the information next received, and stated by Mr. Ellicott—  
*"That the country either was or would be ceded to the Republic of France."*\* It will be recollected that Spain had concurred with the other most considerable European nations in warring against France, in the early years of her revolution; but meeting with defeats, and in danger of being over-run by the French arms, her prime minister, Godoy, made peace with France: and for this act, at that time so auspicious to Spain, he had conferred on him the extraordinary title of *Prince of Peace*. This was in the year 1795. From this time the Spanish councils were under the influence of the French Republican Government; and, eventually, appear to have been in a state of complete subjugation, in whatever materially concerned the interests of France. And to that controlling influence are to be ascribed, all the delays, difficulties and injuries experienced by the United States and their citizens, in every thing relating to their interests in the country in question.

So much for the friendship of France to the United States; which, according to the declarations and demands of her revolutionary rulers, and of many of our own citizens, imposed on the United States obligations of everlasting gratitude! That it was for the purpose of securing the independence of the United States that France rendered the aid we received from her, is true; but this was solely to weaken her old adversary, by lopping off an important limb. In justification of his treating with the Americans, Louis XVI said expressly, that he acted "*with no other view than to put an*

\* Ellicott's Journal, p. 44.

“end to the predominant power which England abused in every part of the globe ;” and, “that the only means of being secured from it, was to *seize the opportunity of diminishing it.*” That opportunity was the war in which we had engaged, to separate the United States from Great-Britain. The King said further, That he formed a connexion with the United States, “because HIS SAFETY, THE INTEREST OF HIS PEOPLE, *invariable policy*, and above all, the *secret projects* of the Court of London, *imperiously laid him under the necessity.*” The secret projects, of which the French government was so apprehensive, were doubtless the measures then contemplated by the British government to effect a reconciliation and re-union of the United States with Great-Britain ; and to defeat them, and so to prevent a re-union, was the leading motive to the French alliance ; while Americans fondly believed, *that friendship for them was its basis.* And Congress itself, from *feeling* or *POLICY*, pronounced Louis the Sixteenth, “the PROTECTOR of the RIGHTS of MANKIND.”\* Indeed the citizens of the United States, rejoiced at the assurance of the aid and co-operation of France, thought only of the *benefit*, without adverting to the *motives* in which it originated.

During our revolutionary war, and ever since, we have been taught to believe that Louis XVI, and his Queen, Maria Antoinette, entertained a personal regard to the United States and their cause. This was *possible* ; and in the glow of our gratitude we cheerfully believed it. But it was *unnatural* that a monarchical power, whose will was law, should desire to promote the establishment of free republican governments. This idea, now so obvious, is shown to be correct, by the statement of the fact, in the interesting memoirs of Madame Campan, published at Paris since the restoration of the Bourbons to the throne of France. And we see it strikingly exemplified in the avowed principles of the emperors and kings who compose the so called “Holy Alliance.”

\* Resolve May 6, 1778, in the journals of Congress.

The sentiments of the persons who composed the court of Louis XVI were doubtless similar to those manifested by the King and Queen; but all sacrificed their feelings, in regard to republicanism, for the sake of humbling their great rival, England. Of all the French officers, *of name*, who served in the United States, and returned to France, la Fayette, I believe, stands alone, invincibly firm in his original principles, for the establishment and maintenance of free governments. We have seen the present monarch of France, his ministers and armies, by their operations in Spain, the last year, violating her independence, and overturning her free government: and who can doubt that his brother, Louis XVI, his ministers and armies, under like circumstances, would have acted the same part?—And that their aid to the United States, in supporting their independence, was rendered solely for the interest of France, I trust has been satisfactorily shown.\*

In the face of all these clear and incontrovertible evidences, that the views of France in aiding us in our revolutionary contest were *exclusively selfish*, and that she aimed at doing serious injuries to the United States in its conclusion, Mr. Jefferson in his letter to Mazzei† charged them with “ingratitude and injustice towards France”! He charged the enlightened and eminent statesmen and patriots who formed the federal constitution, and who organized, and were then administering, the government under it, as “Anglican-Monarchi-

\* Of the expenditures of France, in the maintenance of troops and ships applied *directly* to our aid, I have no data on which to form an estimate; but the capture, plunder, and wanton destruction, of American ships and merchandise, by the French, have been estimated, by a well informed and judicious merchant, the late Thomas Fitzsimons of Philadelphia, at fifty millions of dollars; to wit—twenty millions under the orders of the Directory and their agents, and thirty millions during the imperial reign of Bonaparte. These fifty millions may fairly be set off against the expenditures of France directly made by her in the cause of the United States. The loans of money by France to the United States were all repaid. The estimates of Mr. Fitzsimons were made at my request, and communicated to me by a letter which I have not yet found; but I well remember their amount.

† Mazzei, an Italian gentleman, was in Virginia prior to our revolution; and then the apparently intimate acquaintance between him and Mr. Jefferson, took place. Mazzei returned to Italy.



"cal-Aristocratic ; whose *avowed* object it was, to impose on the people the *substance*, as they had already "given them the *forms*, of the British government." And, after mentioning various measures of the federal government as political "heresies—*established for the "purposes of corruption,*" he points his reproaches at the officers of our government and the members of Congress who had embraced them,—“the men,” he says, “who were Solomons in counsel and Samsons in combat, but whose hair had been cut off by the where “England.” For this infamous slander, which embraced Washington, Hamilton, and all the eminent men who had formed the Constitution, and established the measures referred to, Washington, when he became a private citizen, called Jefferson to account ; requiring of him, in a tone of unusual severity, an explanation of that letter. In what manner the latter humbled himself, and appeased the just resentment of Washington, will never be known ; as, some time after his death, this correspondence was not to be found ; and a diary for an important period of his presidency was also missing. My information on this subject is derived from an authentic source. The late Dr. David Stuart, of Virginia, who married the widow of Mrs. Washington’s son Custis, first mentioned the matter to me, twenty years ago ; and five years afterwards, at my request, stated the circumstances in detail, in a letter, with a voluntary “permission to make what use “of it I should think proper.” A train of occurrences within my knowledge would enable me to unravel what may seem mysterious in this affair ; but I forbear.

Prior to the appearance of Mr. Jefferson’s letter to Mazzei, “there was,” says Dr. Stuart, “a *friendly* “correspondence between him and Washington—since “then, none” : and “before that letter, he used always “either to call on him, when passing by, or to send an “apology for not doing it.”

Notwithstanding these lamentations of Mr. Jefferson to his friend Mazzei, of palpable deviations from repub-

lican principles in the *form* of the *Federal Constitution*, and in the *administration* of the *government*, under Washington, Hamilton, and the eminent federalists of that period in Congress ; yet, after he had gained the President's chair, I do not recollect a single amendment to that "Anglican-Monarchical-Aristocratic" Constitution to have been recommended by him ; nor, that more than one was made, during his presidency ; and that one should have been called an *alteration*, not an *amendment*. Its object was, by requiring the electors to *designate* the person to whom they gave their votes for President, and the one whom they voted for to be Vice President, to prevent the recurrence of a contest like that between him and Mr. Burr, when the states represented in the House were equally divided. And as to his *measures*, I know not any, that related to *principles* of government, which Mr. Jefferson could pretend were more *republican* than those of his predecessors. As to other principles, I will not say there was no difference ; but in regard to them, I content myself with remarking, that, during Washington's administration, and a part of that of his immediate successor, there were no ostentatious professions of regard to the public welfare, nor similar declarations repeated and repeated of a desire of settling existing controversies, in an amicable and friendly manner, with any foreign nation.

Under Mr. Jefferson's administration, three treaties were negotiated with Great Britain. The object of the first (negotiated by Mr. King, pursuant to his instructions) was, an adjustment of the northwestern boundary ; but, from an apprehension that its execution might derogate from a claim as to the northern boundary of Louisiana, it was ratified on the part of the United States with an exception which defeated the treaty. Another, a treaty of amity and commerce with Great-Britain, was negotiated by ministers of Mr. Jefferson's own selection—James Monroe and the late William Pinkney. These gentlemen, it must be presumed, well understood the interests of their country ; and no one will question the diligence and faithfulness



of their endeavours to promote and secure it, in the terms of that treaty. They thought the *informal arrangement* offered by the British negotiators—in whose sincerity they saw reason to confide—would prove, *in practice*, an adequate protection to our seamen, on board American merchant vessels, against impressment. In reference to that informal arrangement, they say, “We persuade ourselves we shall place the business almost, if not altogether, on as good a footing as we should have done by treaty, had the project which we offered them been adopted.”\* This treaty, however, Mr. Jefferson sent back, without laying it before the Senate, although it was then in session; because there was not a *formal stipulation*, by an article in the treaty, against any impressments whatever, of seamen on board those vessels: a stipulation which, from the experience of the American government, during a series of years, he had reason, amounting to moral certainty, to believe to be unattainable; and therefore, I infer, he made such a formal stipulation a *sine qua non*. A third treaty he readily ratified. This was negotiated by Mr. King, pursuant to Mr. Jefferson’s instructions. Its object was, by a compromise with the British government, to put an end to the controversy concerning the ante-revolution debts due to British merchants, and to extinguish the British claims, by paying to its government a round sum; in consideration of which that government undertook to satisfy the demands of its own subjects. This sum was six hundred thousand pounds sterling—equal to \$2,264,000; which was paid from the treasury of the United States. The *merchants* in the Commercial States were the debtors to the British merchants; and generally speaking (I always understood) had, prior to Mr. Jay’s trea-

\* From different sources I received information, from which it appeared clearly, to my apprehension, that with all the parade, kept up for several years, of negotiating a treaty of amity and commerce with Great-Britain, Mr. Jefferson really desired none. A letter from a friend of his, now before me, contains this passage: “I perfectly remember he terminated a conversation on this subject, by observing, that before a treaty could be ratified with Great Britain, she might no longer exist as an independent nation.”—He imagined (as I learned from another source) that Great Britain must sink under the weight of her debt, and the arms of Bonaparte.

ty, paid or compromised their debts, to the satisfaction of their British creditors.

The treaty of peace of 1783 recognized those debts ; and the United States stipulated, that no legal impediments should be opposed to their recovery : but such impediments were opposed ; and that stipulation remained a dead letter. When, therefore, fresh causes of controversy arose, in 1793 and 1794, Washington, to prevent a war with Great-Britain, instituted a new mission to that government, and appointed Mr. Jay, the able and principal negotiator of the treaty of peace of 1783, envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, to negotiate and by treaty to settle the new controversies, and those which had arisen from the non-execution of some of the articles of the treaty of peace. In this negotiation, Mr. Jay honestly renewed, or rather provided for the due performance of, the original stipulation relative to British debts. This, unquestionably, was one thing which contributed to render his treaty unpopular, in some parts of the Union ; while its terminating the recent controversies which hazarded our peace with Great-Britain—disappointing the vehement haters of that country and at the same time ardent lovers of France—raised up enemies to its ratification, in every part of the Union. It was ratified, however, and executed ; and procured for our merchants, who had suffered by British spoliations, indemnities to the amount of more than five millions of dollars, paid to them by the British government. What did they obtain for ten fold more aggravated spoliations committed on their vessels and merchandise, and to ten times that amount, by the Republican and Imperial Governments of France ? Not one cent.

Every independent American must, I presume, view this subject (our relations with France) in the light in which I have now placed it ; and be willing, should it become necessary, to concur with the only great, free and independent nation on earth, besides our own, in measures which the interest and welfare of both may require, to prevent the re-establishment of despotism in the New World.

That France afforded assistance to the United States, in our revolutionary war, exclusively for her own interest, had long ago been manifested; and it seems impossible that with Mr. Jefferson it should ever have been a subject of doubt. But the PEOPLE of the United States having unwittingly entertained and steadily cherished the contrary opinion, their prejudice was too strong to yield even to the force of moral demonstration. And the leaders of the opponents of the federal administration seized on this honest prejudice in favour of France, to obtain popularity; while by every means they excited and promoted opposite sentiments towards Great-Britain, which the resentful passions engendered in the revolutionary war rendered it easy to propagate among the people. These prejudices, diligently cultivated, were among the chief means by which Mr. Jefferson and his partisans acquired a predominance; and they may now safely abandon the scaffolding by which they rose to power. Still, however, for the purpose of enjoying, exclusively, all the benefits to be derived from its possession, they continue to arrogate to themselves the name of *Republicans*; willing and desirous that their federal opponents should, by the people, be deemed aristocrats and monarchists. Yet to the *Federalists* are they indebted for their *republican constitution* and *republican government*; both of which are now very good things, and in their hands quite unexceptionable. Many years ago, in the Senate of the United States, I heard the most frank, the most bold, and in my opinion the most able politician of the, so called, republican party, pronounce a eulogy on the Constitution, as strong and honourable as words could express. And even Mr. Jefferson must have entertained the like opinion; or, in conformity with his libellous remarks on it to his friend Mazzei, he would have proposed to change its features. And now he appears to desire only one alteration—to destroy, as I have before remarked, the independence of the judges. And having three and twenty years ago pronounced the citizens of the Uni-

ted States, composed of the different political parties, "all republicans, all federalists," it might have been expected that by this time, at least, he would be willing we should together form *one people, one nation*, equally entitled to, and equally enjoying the advantages to be derived from, the government of our common country; but it is not so. In his letter to Lieutenant Governor Barry, before mentioned, he *affects* to doubt (for if he *really* doubts he must be a blinder and more narrow minded politician than any of his intelligent followers) he, I say, affects to doubt whether it would be safe to admit federalists into the republican "camp!" that is, to admit to a participation of the public offices, the men whom he, before the representatives of the nation and a numerous assembly of citizens, pronounced, either *honestly* or *deceitfully* (he may choose which term he pleases) to be republicans! And he desires still to foster the spirit of party, by party names; and, assigning to his own the name of *whigs*—originally in England designating the friends of liberty, in opposition to the partisans of the tyrannical race of the Stuarts, who were called *tories*—he would brand all federalists with the latter name, to induce a belief among the people, *that federalists are enemies to liberty!* What federalist can feel a shadow of respect for such a man? If they suppose him sincere in broaching such ideas, they must think lightly of his pretensions to wisdom as a statesman: insincere, I need not say what sentiment they will feel and express.

Wailings for the condition of the Catholics of Ireland, so long suffering under the Protestant oppression of the English government, have been heard throughout the United States. The Dissenters in England are also oppressed. Both pay tithes to support the Ecclesiastics of the Established Church. But what is the real condition of Federalists in the United States? How does it differ from that of the Dissenters and Catholics in the United Kingdom of Great-Britain? Federalists have long been paying tithes to the established Political Clergy of the United States, who exclusively



enjoy all the benefices. Surely there are many high minded, liberal men, among the reigning class, who must see this injustice, and be willing to provide a remedy. One such man, elected the Executive Head of the NATION, and having in view only the "general welfare," and not the continuance of himself in power by a re-election, might remove the existing evil, and "set the people to rights." For the enjoyment of equal rights, *Federal Emancipation* is as necessary in the *United States*, as *Catholic Emancipation* is in *Ireland*.

In stating the preceding facts, and the reflections they suggested, in regard to Mr. Jefferson, I have written with the freedom which the occasion seemed to require, but without the consciousness of any personal animosity. Towards me his deportment has ever been marked with urbanity. It is in reference to his conduct and character as a public man, that he is presented as a just subject of reproach; such as, on a further and full investigation, he will, in my apprehension, appear to the future impartial historian of our country. The sentiments exhibited in his letter to Lieutenant Governor Barry, *at this period*, I confess I could not have expected. That they have excited in me a degree of indignation, I cannot, nor do I desire to, conceal.



## SECTION II.

## JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, AND MR. JEFFERSON'S EMBARGO.

THE first eight letters in the "Correspondence" were interchanged between Nov. 28, 1803, and March 15, 1804. After the lapse of four years and a half, appears No. IX, dated Sept. 19, 1808, from Cunningham; in which he mentions THE EMBARGO; and, after "lamenting that the bitterness of rebuke so often manifested towards his son (John Quincy Adams) had been extended to Mr. Adams himself," asks his opinion "on that public measure, which had so agitated our country," and in producing which his son had acted so conspicuous a part. This unlucky question was the putting of a match to a mass of combustibles, which soon kindled to a flame, and threatened to burn me up.

John Q. Adams and myself were, in 1803, chosen by the Legislature of Massachusetts to represent that State in the Senate of the United States; and we took our seats there in the session which commenced in October of that year. He was then a federalist, and for a good while acted in that character. Some cases, however, occurred, in which he displayed a zeal in coincidence with the views and wishes of the President, Mr. Jefferson. He particularly distinguished himself in the attempt to expel from the Senate John Smith of Ohio, as one concerned in Aaron Burr's conspiracy, or project, whatever it was: for Burr and his accomplices were the marked objects of Mr. Jefferson's hatred and revenge. There were passages in Mr. Adams's report in Smith's case, which outraged, I believe, every distinguished lawyer in America. The process of law, with its "pace of snail," was too slow for his vengeance. But this by the by. It was the unfortunate question of the Embargo, which, in regard to myself, set the ink a-running through President Adams's pen;

and it continued running in the whole of his correspondence, not unmingled with gall. Of the Embargo, therefore, it is necessary to give an account.

The Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, in the prosecution of his plan of universal dominion, having overturned the Prussian monarchy—and resting a little while in its capital, Berlin—on the 21st of November 1806, issued a decree, called the Berlin decree; whose object was, the destruction of the commerce of Great-Britain, his persevering enemy, and the only country in Europe (the waters of the sea intervening) which his arms could not reach. The decree consisted of ten articles. By the first, “The British Islands are declared in a state of blockade.” By the second, “All commerce and correspondence with the British Islands are prohibited.” And by the fifth, “All trade in English merchandise is forbidden; all merchandise belonging to England, or coming from its manufactures and colonies, is declared lawful prize.”\*

Plain as was the intention of this decree, from the words of it, yet an interpretation, indicating an exception favourable to the neutral commerce of the United States, was given to it, by the French Minister of Marine—but unsanctioned by the Emperor, or even by his Minister for Foreign Affairs, to whose department (as the Minister of Marine avowed) the question more properly belonged. That interpretation, however, served to amuse our government—willing to be amused—even when not bearing on its face (to use the words of President Adams in another case) “the plausible appearance of a probability” of its giving the real meaning of the decree. At length the time arrived, when it suited the convenience of the Emperor to carry his decree into rigorous execution. The commerce of the United States with the British dominions was probably at that time of as much importance to the former, as their commerce with all the world besides; and, as the benefits of a fair commerce are

\* The whole Decree, and the documents communicated with it, by the President, are in the volumes of State Papers, published by Wait and Sons.

reciprocal, Great-Britain shared with the United States the advantages of that intercourse; and so far the views of the imperial tyrant were obstructed. He had long shown himself indifferent to the interests of his own commercial subjects: the plunder of conquered nations supplied the place of that revenue which would accrue from foreign commerce. He, of course, would be perfectly regardless of the interests of the United States. So the Berlin decree went into full operation. The papers on the subject were transmitted to our government from Paris, by General Armstrong, our minister at the imperial court; and were communicated by the President to Congress, with the following message, recommending an

#### EMBARGO.

*"To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States.*

"The communications now made, shewing the great and increasing dangers with which our vessels, our seamen, and merchandise, are threatened on the high seas and elsewhere, from the belligerent powers of Europe, and it being of the greatest importance to keep in safety these essential resources, I deem it my duty to recommend the subject to the consideration of Congress, who will doubtless perceive all the advantages which may be expected from an inhibition of the departure of our vessels from the ports of the United States.

"Their wisdom will also see the necessity of making every preparation for whatever events may grow out of the present crisis.

*"I ask a return of the letters of Messrs. Armstrong and Champagny, which it would be improper to make public."*

"Dec. 13, 1807.

TH: JEFFERSON."

The last paragraph of the message (in Italics) is omitted in the copy in the State Papers, as well as in the Journal of the Senate; but is retained in the Journal of the House of Representatives. It was, on a formal motion in the Senate, ordered not to be entered on their Journal. I cannot assign, for I do not recollect, any reason for it. Possibly the mover felt some delicacy on the subject, after voting for the law recommended in the message; seeing a part of the documents, on which it was *avowedly founded*, were *withdrawn*; and so far *the basis of his vote was taken away*.

No. 1. Was a proclamation, dated Oct. 16, 1807, by the King of Great-Britain, requiring his "natural born

subjects, seafaring men," serving in foreign vessels, to return home, according to their duty and allegiance, to defend their own country, then menaced and endangered, from the arms of France and of the nations subjected to her power, whom she honoured with the name of allies. Such proclamations are common among nations engaged in war ; and no well-informed man will, I presume, dispute their justness. And because it was known that numbers of such seamen did continue to serve in foreign vessels, British naval officers were required to take and bring away all such persons who should be found serving in any foreign merchant vessel ; but with a special injunction to offer no violence to such vessel, or to the remainder of the crew.

No. 2. Was an extract of a letter, dated Sept. 18, 1807, from the French Grand Judge, Minister of Justice, to the Imperial Advocate General for the Council of Prizes. It was an answer to some questions which concerned the execution of the Berlin decree.

" 1st. May vessels of war, by virtue of the imperial decree of the 21st of November last, seize, on board neutral vessels, either English property, or even all merchandise proceeding from the English manufactories or territory ?"

" *Answer.* His Majesty has intimated, that as he did not think proper to express any exception in his decree, there is no ground for making any in its execution, in relation to any whomsoever."

" 2. His Majesty has postponed a decision on the question, Whether armed French vessels ought to capture neutral vessels bound to or from England, even when they have no English merchandise on board."

(Signed) "REGNIER."

Of these two papers no secret was made ; and for a plain reason ; the British proclamation had many days before been published in the newspapers. The copy laid by Mr. Jefferson before the Senate had been cut out of a newspaper—a form not the most respectful, of a document laid before the Legislature of the United States, by their President. In like manner, the *sub-*



*stance*, if not the words, of the Grand Judge Regnier's letter had been published. But these two papers had excited little, if any, concern among those most interested—our merchants and seafaring people: they saw, in the proclamation, not an *increased*, but a *diminished* danger of impressments; and French cruisers on the seas were then few in number.

The third paper was a letter, dated Sept. 24, 1807, from General Armstrong to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Champagny; asking him, whether the report he had just heard was true—"that a new and "extended construction, highly' injurious to the commerce of the United States, was about to be given to "the Imperial decree of the 21st of November 1806" (the Berlin decree.)

The fourth document was Champagny's answer to Armstrong, bearing date Oct. 7, 1807, and which, with a little difference in the phraseology, is the same with that of the Grand Judge Regnier, before mentioned, to the Imperial Advocate General; from whom, indeed, Champagny says he received the explanation. These are his words: "His Majesty has considered every "neutral vessel, going from English ports, with cargoes of English merchandise, or of English origin, as "lawfully seized by French armed vessels."

Here an obvious question presents itself. Seeing Armstrong's letter simply asks the question, whether his information about the Berlin decree was correct—and Champagny's answer tells him that it was—why did Mr. Jefferson ask a return of these two papers, saying, "it would be improper to make them public"? The solution may be found in the last paragraph of Champagny's letter, in which he says, "The decree of "blockade has now been issued eleven months. The "principal powers of Europe, [meaning Holland, Spain, "and the other powers which the arms of France had "subjected to her control] far from protesting against "its provisions, have adopted them. They have perceived *that its execution must be COMPLETE to render it "more effectual.*" The commerce of the United States



surpassed that of all the other neutral nations; and with the British dominions was very extensive, and of vast importance to both. To render the blockade of the British islands "complete," the commerce of neutrals with them *must cease*. This object, in respect to the United States, could be accomplished only by an *Embargo*. In four days after the arrival at Washington of Armstrong's despatches by the *Revenge*, containing the letters of the Grand Judge and Bonaparte's Minister Champagny, Mr. Jefferson recommended his Unlimited Embargo.\*—One more fact:—On the 8th of February 1808 (less than two months after the passing of the embargo law) the Secretary of State, Mr. Madison, in his letter to General Armstrong, on this subject, says, "The conduct of the French government, in giving this extended operation to its decree, and indeed in issuing one with such an apparent or doubtful import against the rights of the sea, is the more extraordinary, inasmuch as the inability to enforce it on that element, exhibited the measure in the light of an EMPTY MENACE.†—So then, Mr. Jefferson's Embargo, which prostrated our immense commerce, which ruined many, and seriously injured

\* The following extract, recently found among my papers, of a letter, dated January 2, 1808 (eleven days after the embargo law had passed) from a respectable gentleman in New-York to his father, a member of Congress at Washington, merits attention.

"It is said, and from correct sources, that Mr. Armstrong gave notice, in Amsterdam, that a general embargo would take place in the United States immediately on the arrival of the *Revenge*; and that, in one day, sugar rose from 13 to 19 dollars, and coffee from 21 to 27 stivers, in consequence of that information."

The *Revenge* arrived at New-York. The bearer of the despatches was Dr. Bullus, surgeon to the marine corps. New-York papers announced her arrival, and, among other articles of news, stated this—that the French Emperor said *there should be no neutrals*. I did not doubt the truth of the report; but, not having the evidence of the fact, in my first letter to Gov. Sullivan, Feb. 16, 1808, on the embargo, I merely asked the question, "Has the French Emperor declared that he will have no neutrals?" J. Q. Adams, in his letter to Mr. Otis, dated the following 31st of March, roundly affirmed, that "The French Emperor had *not* declared that he would have no neutrals." Yet it afterwards appeared that Gen. Armstrong officially communicated the Emperor's declaration, "That the Americans should be compelled to take the positive character of either *allies* or *enemies*;" that is, they should not be *neutrals*.

† State Papers, vol. 1808-9, page 232.

all, of our citizens, was founded on an *empty menace*! I now leave every intelligent reader to judge, whether the real object of the Embargo was, “to keep in safety “our vessels and merchandise,”—or, to render the French Emperor’s decree of blockade of the British islands “complete.” To him, it is certain, the Embargo was acceptable; he passed a decree to enforce its execution. And at a subsequent period (August 5, 1810) his minister informed Gen. Armstrong, that “the Emperor applauded the Embargo.”

Such were the grounds, or pretexts, for the Embargo. The President’s message, and the four papers accompanying it, were referred to a committee, of whom John Q. Adams was one. In a short time they reported a bill for laying an Embargo. It was read once. A motion made to read it, immediately, a second time, was objected to; it was repugnant to a standing rule of the Senate, wisely formed, to prevent hasty decisions. To remove this difficulty, the Senate, on a motion for the purpose, “*Resolved*, That so much “of the 12th rule for doing business in the Senate, as “requires that three readings shall be on three different days, unless the Senate *unanimously* direct otherwise, be suspended for three days.” The bill was then read a second time, as in committee of the whole, and reported to the House without amendment. Then the bill (having been quickly engrossed) was read a third time, and passed—yeas 22, nays 6. Those who voted in the negative were

Messrs. Crawford,	Maclay,
Goodrich,	Pickering,
Hillhouse,	White.

The time occupied in this business, from the reception of the President’s message, to the passing of the bill, was about four hours. It was Friday. A motion was made to postpone the further consideration of the bill until the next Monday: It passed in the negative. On motion of Mr. Crawford,—That the bill be postponed till the next day, it passed in the negative, yeas 12, nays 16. Mr. Adams was among the nays. No

member of the Senate displayed equal zeal for the passing of the bill. In opposing a postponement, to obtain further information, and to consider a measure of such moment, of such universal concern, Mr. Adams made this memorable declaration: "The President has recommended the measure on his high responsibility: *I would not consider—I would not deliberate: I would act. Doubtless the PRESIDENT possesses such further information as will justify the measure*"! This sentiment was so extraordinary, that I instantly wrote it down. It shocked even Mr. Jefferson's devoted partisans. "However I may *vote*, (a member was heard to remark) *that* is too much for me to *say*." For my own part, I originally viewed, and I still view, the sentiment as so abhorrent to the principles of a free government, so derogatory to the character of a member of Congress, such a dereliction of duty, and so disgraceful to a man of sense, that I am incapable of conceiving of any counterbalance in official honours and emoluments. An embassy, a judgeship, or the presidency, to an honourable and independent mind, would, in the comparison, be "as a drop in the bucket—and the small dust of the balance." Upon the principle advanced by J. Q. Adams, what becomes of the "checks and balances," which are the pillars of his father's "Great Work" (as it has been called) on the American Constitutions of Government? By the Constitution of the United States, the Senate and House of Representatives were intended as checks on the acts of each other, and both as checks on those of the President. The sentiment expressed by Mr. Adams resolves the whole business of legislation into the will of the Executive.

The bill, passed by the Senate, was immediately sent to the House of Representatives. There it was long and earnestly contested; and did not pass until Tuesday, the 22d of December. On the same day it received the President's approbation, and became a law.

In the year 1807, the registered tonnage of the Uni-

ted States, employed in foreign trade, amounted to 848,306 tons. Of this, Massachusetts owned 310,309 tons, almost equal to the united tonnage of the three states of New-York, Pennsylvania and Maryland, which amounted only to 322,836 tons. That vast quantity of shipping belonging to Massachusetts, giving employment to many thousands of her citizens on the water and on the land, was to be laid waste by the Embargo, unlimited in its duration, and contemplated, I have not a shadow of doubt, by its author, to endure as long as the war between France and Great-Britain should continue.

Seeing *then*, as every impartial reader will *now* see and acknowledge, that the *reasons*, presented to Congress for imposing the Embargo, were but *shallow pretences*, and, as resting on the Berlin decree, amounted, according to Mr. Madison, only to "an empty menace;" and as, according to J. Q. Adams (as will presently be shown) the four papers laid before Congress, containing Mr. Jefferson's reasons for recommending an Embargo, were but four "naughts;" and viewing with horror and indignation its destructive effects; I thought it to be my duty to give to the greatest navigating State in the Union, which I in part represented, such information concerning it as was in my power; that the State might take such measures to obtain a removal of the evil as her wisdom should direct. For this purpose, I wrote a long letter, dated the 16th of February 1808, to Mr. Sullivan, Governor of Massachusetts, to be laid before the Legislature, then in session; and through that channel to pass to all my fellow-citizens. But, from a knowledge of his party politics, apprehensive that my object would not be obtained through him, I sent a copy to my excellent friend, the lately deceased George Cabot—a man of so enlightened a mind, of such wisdom, virtue and piety, that one must travel far, very far, to find his equal. After waiting a few days, finding that the original was not communicated to the Legislature, Mr. Cabot sent the copy to a printer. It first appeared in a small pamphlet; and, being re-published in pamphlets



and newspapers, was soon spread over the United States. In this letter I neither named nor alluded to my colleague, J. Q. Adams.

The Governor refused to communicate my letter to the Legislature. He sent it back to me, in a letter of rebuke, for my expecting him to make such a communication. In my reply, justifying the step I had taken, I said, "I confess there seemed to be a peculiar fitness in a Senator's addressing the Legislature from whom he immediately derives his appointment. And in the present case, seeing my letter embraced the highest concerns of our country, in which Massachusetts holds so large a stake, especially in a commercial point of view, I could not imagine that I was offending her chief magistrate, in presenting a view of those concerns to *him*, to be afterwards laid before the *Legislature*." This reply was dated the 9th of March. On the 18th, the Governor wrote me a long, but not *very courteous*, letter. My answer, not destitute of reciprocity, was still longer; and, in the estimation of my friends in Boston, who caused it to be printed, was, in all respects, a complete vindication. The last paragraph in the Governor's letter contained these words: "Mr. Adams, your colleague, is quite opposed to you in his opinion of the embargo. He voted for it, and still considers it as a wise measure, and as a necessary one. I have his letters before me upon it." In answer to this, I say, "True—he did vote for the embargo; and I must now tell your Excellency how he advocated that measure. It is not willingly, sir, that I speak of him in an address to the public. Though often opposed in opinion, on national measures, there has never existed for a moment any personal difference between us. But as you have now contrasted his opinion with mine, to invalidate my public statements, you compel me to relate the fact.

"In my first letter I informed your Excellency of the haste with which the embargo bill was passed in the Senate. I also informed you that a 'little more time was repeatedly asked, to obtain further infor-

" *mation*, and *to consider* a measure of such moment.  
 " of such universal concern; but that those requests  
 " were denied; and I must now add, by no one more  
 " zealously than by Mr. Adams, my colleague. Hear  
 " his words. But even your Excellency's strong faith  
 " in the President's supreme wisdom may pause, while  
 " independent men will be shocked, at the answer of  
 " my colleague to those requests. 'The President (said  
 " he) has recommended the measure on his high re-  
 " sponsibility: I would *not consider*—I would *not deli-*  
 " *berate*: I would *act*. Doubtless the *President* pos-  
 " sesses such further information as will justify the  
 " measure'!—Need I give to your Excellency any  
 " other proof (though other proof abounds) of 'blind  
 " confidence in our rulers?' Need I give further evi-  
 " dence of 'the dangerous extent of Executive influ-  
 " ence?' When the people of Massachusetts see a  
 " man, of Mr. Adams's acknowledged abilities and learn-  
 " ing, advancing such sentiments; when they see a  
 " man, of his knowledge of the nature of all govern-  
 " ments, and of his intimate acquaintance with our own  
 " free republican government, and of the rights and  
 " duties of the legislature; especially of their *right* and  
 " *duty to consider, to deliberate*, and, according to their  
 " *own judgment*, independently of Executive plea-  
 " sure, to decide on every public measure; when, I  
 " say, the people of Massachusetts see this, will they  
 " wonder if a *majority* in Congress should be *over-*  
 " *whelmed by the authority of Executive recommen-*  
 " *dations*? And had I not reason to be alarmed  
 " 'at the dangerous extent of Executive influence,'  
 " which to me appeared to be leading the public mind,  
 " by its blind confidence, to public ruin?"

The reader has now the whole of what was written  
 and published concerning J. Q. Adams, in my corre-  
 spondence with Governor Sullivan; and it is to this  
 that President Adams refers, when, after a page of vi-  
 rulent abuse, he says, "He [Pickering] broke out at  
 " last in a rage, and threw a firebrand into our Massa-  
 " chusetts legislature against his colleague. The stub-

ble was dry, and the flame easily took hold.”\* Mr. Adams, accustomed to let loose his violent passions, mistakes the rage burning in his own breast, for a flame which he fancies that he sees lighted up in the bosom of the person he is intemperately reviling.

In a preceding letter (XIV) dated Nov. 7, 1808, Mr. Adams has been pleased to describe me in the following words: “The gentleman has wreaked his revenge on my son, in letters which shew the character of the man bitter and malignant, ignorant and jesuitical. His revenge has been sweet, and he has rolled it as a delicious morsel under his tongue.” To this reproach I disdain to offer a contradiction. If the reader can find any ground for it, in the foregoing extracts from my last letter to Governor Sullivan (for, as I have said already, it was in that letter only that I named or alluded to his son) then let the reproach fasten upon me.

Here is the source of the father’s wrath. In my correspondence with Governor Sullivan, I was constrained to state, in the manner before mentioned, a fact which occurred in the Senate of the United States, in order to justify my own vote against the embargo, contrary to the vote of my colleague, J. Q. Adams, on the same question. Of the character of that fact, every reader will judge. I have given my own sense of it. If the fact was honourable to his son, why should the father’s wrath be kindled against me for stating it? That it has been kindled, and into a flame, his whole correspondence with Cunningham affords demonstrative proof. What is the obvious inference? That, in his opinion, the fact recited was dishonourable to his son.

In his letter to Mr. Otis, Mr. J. Q. Adams intimates a reproach to me for spending my time, when a senator, in writing the letter to Governor Sullivan; while he was assiduously devoted to his senatorial duties. But where was his regard to his duty as a legislator for the Union, in advocating and voting for a law which paralysed all the business of the nation; when, by his own admission, it had only four ciphers for its basis?

\* Letter XVII, to Cunningham.

Where was his attention to the rights and interests of his constituents of Massachusetts, when his utmost exertions were made to impose that law upon them? a law *deceptively* called an *Embargo*; which is a measure sometimes adopted for an important national object, of a temporary nature: but the law in question was without limitation. The law was *general* in its terms, interdicting our commerce with all nations: it would not have been convenient to discriminate: but, accurately speaking, its title should have been—‘An Act to prohibit all commerce with Great-Britain and her dominions.’ Whether J. Q. Adams really *performed his duty* in thus advocating and voting for the embargo—or *abandoned it*; whether he *guarded* the interests of his constituents of Massachusetts, or *betrayed* them, the reader can now form a pretty correct opinion: but, if he will accompany me as I proceed, he will see the latter completely established.

I proceed with the Embargo; though I fear the reader will be as weary of the details concerning it, as the people of the United States were of the embargo itself, when they threw the intolerable load from their shoulders. I pray for the reader’s patience a little longer.

My first letter to Governor Sullivan, giving an account of the embargo—exposing it stripped of the disguise which concealed its deformity—was opening the eyes of the people, to see the delusion practised upon them. The administration stood in need of justification; and J. Q. Adams stepped forth as its champion. *The zeal of new converts is proverbial.* The justification was in the form of a letter, addressed, *nominally*, to Harrison Gray Otis. In this letter, Mr. Adams took new ground on which to rest the embargo; the British Orders in Council, of the 11th of November 1807—issued to retaliate the French Emperor’s Berlin decree. As the latter interdicted the commerce of neutral nations with the British islands—which in its execution was extended to all the British dominions—its object, as already observed, being to ruin the com-



merce of Britain, as an essential source of that revenue which enabled her to contend successfully with France ; so the Orders in Council interdicted the commerce of neutrals with France and her allies and their dependencies, and with all other countries, under the control of France, whose ports were shut against British commerce ; with the exception, however, of a direct trade between neutral nations and the colonies of the enemies of Great-Britain. Mr. Adams describes these orders as “ studiously concealed until the moment when “ they *burst upon our heads.*” Whereas our government was apprised, by the British Secretary of State (Lord Howick) soon after the Berlin decree was issued, that measures of retaliation would be necessary, on the part of Great-Britain. The first was a prohibition of the coasting trade carried on by neutral vessels, from one port to another of France and her allies ; and notice thereof was immediately given to our Minister in London. This was on the 10th of January 1807. But the French Emperor continuing his Berlin decree, and in September, in that year, directing its execution, without any exception of the nations affected by it, the British government, having waited almost a year, and no neutral nation having offered any efficient interposition to obtain a repeal of the Berlin decree, made and proclaimed the retaliating Orders in Council of November 11th, 1807.

Perhaps it may be asked, How could any of the nations then neutral, the United States for instance, the principal neutral power, interpose, with *effect*, to obtain a revocation of the Berlin decree ? The answer is obvious. That decree was such a monstrous stride in imperial tyranny, so atrocious a violation of our treaty with France (a treaty made with Bonaparte himself when first consul) such an outrage on the law of nations, that all commerce with that country, and with her allies and dependencies, might have been prohibited, and the prohibition effectually enforced ; while our commerce would have been protected against the small naval power of France. The American navy,

with the requisite increase then in our power, would soon have been completely competent to that object: not Mr. Jefferson's contemptible gun-boat system; the expenditures on which were enough to have built a squadron of frigates. And had he possessed any portion of the spirit manifested by President Adams and the Congress of 1798, such a resistance would have been made.\* But nothing was more remote from Mr. Jefferson's policy than such resistance; while it was the only measure which could have had a tendency to effect a revocation of the decree. Or, if the pride and obstinacy of the Emperor should have caused him to persevere, at least our commerce would have been protected. Whereas the timid subserviency of our government naturally invited the Emperor to persist in his scheme of universal plunder. And the delusive hopes which the actual conduct of our government excited among the people, enticed them to hazard their property on the seas, and even to enter the ports of France and her allies; thus rushing into the mouths of the sharks which the decrees of Bonaparte had opened to devour them.

The British Orders in Council, of which every body has heard, were not, like French decrees, put in instant execution, "without a moment's warning:" they were not "pounced" upon all neutral commerce. Time was allowed for neutrals to receive information of them, before their vessels would be subjected to their operation. These were the Orders which J. Q. Adams has said "stood in front of the real causes of the embargo." "To argue (said he) upon the subject of our disputes with Great-Britain, *or upon the motives for the embargo, and keep them out of sight,* is like laying your finger over the *unit* before a series of *naughts*, and then arithmetically proving that

\* To protect our commerce in 1798, all commerce with France and her dominions was prohibited. Our armed vessels were instructed to capture all French armed vessels. Our merchant vessels were permitted to arm in their own defence. Vigorous measures were adopted to increase our vessels of war. And all our treaties with France, grossly violated by her, were declared void.

“they all amount to nothing.” Now I will show, that when the embargo was recommended, and when the bill passed in the Senate, those Orders in Council were, in fact, out of sight of the President—out of sight of the Secretary of State—out of sight of the Senate—and out of sight of Mr. Adams himself.

1. Mr. Jefferson, together with his message recommending an embargo, sent to Congress the four papers I have already described; saying, that *those papers* showed the great and increasing dangers to our vessels, our seamen and merchandise; against which he expected the wisdom of Congress would provide. And, far from placing the Orders in Council in *front* of the causes for the embargo, there is not the slightest reason to believe that he thought of their existence. On the contrary, forty-six days afterwards, viz. in his message to Congress, of February 2, 1808,\* laying before them the Orders in Council, he says, “I transmit them to Congress as a *farther* proof of the increasing dangers to our navigation and commerce, which led to the provident measure of the act of the present session, laying an embargo on our own vessels.”

2. Mr. Madison, in his letter of December 23, 1807†—the day after the embargo law was enacted—to William Pinkney, our minister in London, says, “I enclose you a copy of a message from the President to Congress, and their act in pursuance of it, laying an immediate embargo on our vessels and exports. The *policy* and the *causes* of the measure are explained in the message itself.” But Mr. Madison, like Mr. Adams, was afterwards willing to drag in the Orders in Council to bolster up that mischievous measure. Accordingly, in his next letter to Mr. Pinkney, dated Feb. 19, 1808, Mr. Madison says, “My last, which was committed to the British packet, enclosed a copy of the act of embargo, and explained the *policy* of the measure;” leaving out “causes.” More cautious, however, than Mr. Adams, *or having a better memory*,

\* State Papers, vol. 1806-8, p. 263.

† State Papers, vol. 1808-9, p. 260.

he does not venture to assign the Orders in Council as a *cause* of the embargo ; much less to place them “ in *front* of the real causes of the embargo ;” but contents himself with saying, that “ among the considerations which *enforced* it, was the probability of such decrees as were issued by the British government, on the 11th of November ; the language of the British gazettes, with other indications, having left little doubt that such were meditated.” But these were *after thoughts*, the expression of which does no honour to Mr. Madison ; as they bear an *insinuation*, that those *rumours* of British orders were among the *motives* which influenced the President to recommend an embargo ; which he knew was not the case.

3. I have said, that as to J. Q. Adams himself, the Orders in Council were out of sight, when he zealously advocated and voted for the embargo. This is a plain inference from the facts I have already stated. When hard pressed for adequate causes for the embargo, and not finding them in the four documents communicated with the message, Mr. Adams, it will be recollected, had recourse to the President’s *highly responsible recommendation* of the measure, and the *possible information* locked up in his bosom, to justify the passage of the law. Now, if the Orders in Council furnished the great and prominent cause for the embargo, and if, compared with them, the four papers assigned by the President as the only causes for an embargo were but four “ *naughts* ;” is it possible that “ those all-devouring instruments of rapine,” as Mr. Adams calls the Orders in Council, should never have risen in their terrific forms to his view ? that he should not have so presented them to the view of the Senate ? and that they should not have caused him to pour forth a deluge of his appalling metaphors, in describing them ? I hesitate not to pronounce it impossible. “ Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Should he assert the contrary, no man of common understanding can believe him. At all events, it is clear, from the President’s first message and documents, and from



the quotations already made from his next message, and from Mr. Madison's letters, that neither Mr. Jefferson nor he had the Orders in Council in their minds, when assigning and mentioning the causes of the embargo.

4. It is equally clear, that no other Senator, in voting for the embargo, contemplated the Orders in Council, because no one adverted to them in the discussion.

I now consider it as demonstrated, that Mr. Jefferson's embargo was not recommended by him, "to keep in safety our vessels, our seamen and our merchant-dise." And as no man who thinks at all does any act of consequence without a motive, and as I am incapable of discerning any other, I do not hesitate to say, that its object was *a co-operation with the French Emperor, to diminish, and as far as possible to destroy, the commerce of Great-Britain; and thereby compel her at least to make peace, if not absolutely to subject her to the control of the imperial conqueror; when it was apparent that the object of his ambition was universal empire.* I add, that the mischievous measure I have been exposing was not an *embargo*, but an *absolute prohibition of commerce*, and therefore *a violation of the Constitution*: for the power given to Congress to *regulate*, cannot be construed to authorize the *annihilation* of commerce: but such was the nature, and such would have been the effect, of this perpetual law—perpetual in its terms—if the people of the United States had tamely continued to submit to it. But they would not submit; and Congress were obliged to repeal it. The commercial part of our nation considered the Berlin decree, and the still more outrageous one issued at Milan, with the British orders in council, superadded, as less injurious than Mr. Jefferson's edict called an Embargo: *and all those decrees and orders continued in force, when the embargo law was repealed.*

I have but one more fact to state on this subject: it is this—that on his first hearing the news of the embargo, *President Adams earnestly condemned it.* But he did not then know that his son had voted for it,

and was its most strenuous advocate : that son, of whom he said, there was not an honester or abler man in the United States.\* When afterwards he learned what a conspicuous part his son had acted in favour of the embargo, he also thought it a wise measure. He even doubted whether it ought to have been limited ! He says, "The policy of a limitation to the embargo "is, in a national view, and on a large scale, a nice "question."† That a man of his strong understanding, extensive knowledge, and great experience, *when judging with an unbiassed mind*, should have condemned the embargo—especially an embargo of unlimited duration—was perfectly natural ; and, but for the agency of his son J. Q. Adams in imposing it, and his continuing joined to the dominant party, he would never have ceased to condemn it. Then, too, I might have been exempted from his calumnies : for it was my involuntary exhibition of his son's conduct about the embargo, that kindled the father's wrath against me ; which, in the effervescence of his foaming passions, threw up that foul scum which is spread over all his letters where my name is mentioned.

The immense importance ascribed by Mr. Adams to his son, John Quincy, induces me to state—that, having received a law education, he commenced the practice of it in Boston ; but soon (in 1794) when his father was Vice-President, he was appointed Minister Resident of the United States to the States of Holland. His father places this first step in diplomacy to the account of Washington's gratitude for the son's rescu-

\* Letter to Cunningham, No. XLIII, dated July 31, 1809. J. Q. Adams was then on the point of departure from Boston, bound to Russia, as minister plenipotentiary from the United States. "I hope," says the father, "his absence "will not be long. *Aristides is banished because he is too just.* HE WILL "NOT LEAVE AN HONESTER OR ABLE MAN BEHIND HIM." Here is a singular confusion of ideas. To the inclement region of Siberia in Russia, her despots have been accustomed to banish offending subjects. Aristides the just was *driven* into banishment by the votes of his fickle fellow citizens. J. Q. Adams *voluntarily accepted* of the mission to Russia. It was his first reward for abandoning the cause of federalism, and his father's and his own original principles. He perceived "there was no getting along, or being any thing, without popularity ;" and the path to popularity was that opened by Mr. Jefferson—then the idol of the people : his measures must be supported.

† Letter X, to Cunningham, p. 29.

ing the government from the overwhelming flood of democratic fanaticism, raised in the preceding year by the influence or proceedings of Monsieur Genet. Minister from the French Republic. "John Quincy Adams's writings (says his father) first turned this tide."—"Not all Washington's ministers, Hamilton and Pickens included, could have written those papers, *which were so fatal to Genet*. Washington saw it, and felt "his obligations."\*

Mr. Adams's overweening opinion of his son's talents, and his raging enmity to others, makes him forget and confound times and facts. I had then nothing to do with the cabinet. The general post-office was my department. But Mr. Jefferson was at that time (1793) Secretary of State; and he has always been reputed to possess certain talents, some knowledge of public law and of foreign affairs, and a familiar acquaintance with the rights and duties of ministers; having himself been minister from the United States to the Court of France, from the year 1785 to 1789. And being Secretary of State, it was his special duty to enter the lists with Mr. Genet; but he shrunk, it seems, from the fearful task. Alexander Hamilton, too, then Secretary of the Treasury, was believed to be a man of understanding, with a capacity to manifest its strength on paper. Even at the age of eighteen, he encountered successfully the most powerful Tory advocates of British taxation. But what of all this? Mr. Adams represents Alexander Hamilton at one time as not possessing a particle of common sense; at another, as an ignoramus; and that, in a certain conversation with him, "he talked like a fool;" and at length sinks him even below Elbridge Gerry! Yes—Elbridge Gerry was Alexander Hamilton's master in finance!†

In this state of terror and dismay, when all Washington's ministers trembled at the sight of the French Leviathan, forth stepped a youthful champion, son of

\* Letter XII, dated Oct. 15, 1808, to Cunningham.

† See Mr. Adams's Letter, No. XIII, May 29, 1809, published in the Boston Patriot; an extract from which will be inserted in the section concerning Hamilton.



the venerable sage of Quincy, and (like the stripling son of Jesse who slew the Philistine giant) "put a hook in his nose."

It will be impossible to doubt of the persuasive motives that influenced John Q. Adams to desert the cause, policy and principles of federalists, and join himself to their adversaries. In addition to what I have already stated, look at the following facts.

In a little more than a year after turning out as the champion for the embargo, to wit, on the 4th of March 1809, Mr. Madison (it being the first day of his presidency) nominated J. Q. Adams Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of the Emperor of Russia. The Senate put their negative on the nomination. But Mr. Madison, having called a special meeting of Congress in the following May, repeated the nomination; and, by a change in some votes, the nomination was approved. Mr. Adams was next appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of London; then one of the Commissioners for negotiating a peace with Great-Britain; and, in the last place, Secretary of State. There is but one more step in the ladder of ambition; and there are not wanting partisans to aid him in the ascent—so far as perpetual eulogies can give him aid. His abilities and learning have been highly extolled. His father possessed the same qualifications. But something more is requisite in the character of a safe and useful President. Whose passions, of the two, are the most violent, it may be difficult to decide. Those of the son may, perhaps, be managed with the most discretion: from the father's errors he may have learned some degree of caution. But his review of the works of Fisher Ames, one of the most able, excellent and amiable of men—and his last fourth of July oration—exhibit a temper which no candid, liberal and honourable mind would indulge. In both are manifested a rancour alike unbecoming a gentleman, a statesman and a Christian. Of what value are *professions*, without the *spirit*, of Christianity? In vain will you search for this spirit in the conduct of either father



or son. In what part of the gospel did the latter find a warrant for *him* to throw the bolts of Heaven? Where, to authorize *him* to interpret the events of Providence, as the special judicial acts of the Deity, applied to individual sufferers? In his oration, he has the boldness to ascribe the insanity of George the Third to the judgment of Heaven; to consider his insanity—the most deplorable malady incident to suffering humanity; an affliction, the bare idea of which would melt any but the most obdurate heart—as a punishment inflicted by God, for the evils experienced by the Colonies in his reign, from the oppressive acts of parliament, and the consequent American war. “Suppose “ye that those Galileans (whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices) were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay:”—“Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay.” These words have an authority which J. Q. Adams will not controvert. His father, more placable, has expressed his belief, that George the Third “was not a tyrant in disposition and in nature;” but that he was “deceived by his courtiers on both sides of the Atlantic; and in his official capacity only cruel.”

Had J. Q. Adams been a private citizen, the sentiments in his oration, here adverted to, would have been a subject of just reproach: but, viewing him as *the Secretary of State*—the officer of the government whose particular duty it was to hold a courteous and amicable intercourse with foreign nations with whom the United States were at peace—it was peculiarly indecorous thus to insult the memory of the deceased King. From his general reputation, if there was, at that period, a monarch in Europe, whose actions and whose life were regulated by moral principles, it was George the Third. Will it then be deemed a stretch of candour to suppose, that he verily thought himself bound by the duties of his station, as the head of the British empire, to preserve it entire?

On the score of talents and learning, the experience of five and thirty years, in the United States, has furnished ample proof, *that a practical knowledge of the interests of the country, and common sense deliberately exercised in forming a sound judgment, united with perfect integrity and pure and disinterested patriotism, are of infinitely greater value, than genius without stability, profound learning, ripe scholarship, and philosophy ;—the latter often wasting its energies in visionary theories and political dreams.*

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### SECTION III.

THE CAUSES, PRETENDED AND REAL, FOR REMOVING T. PICKERING FROM OFFICE—THE MISSION TO FRANCE IN 1799—THE PARDON OF FRIES.

It appears to have been a material object of Mr. Adams, in his Correspondence with Cunningham, where he labours to justify his dismissing me from the office of secretary of state, to show that I did not possess the qualifications necessary to perform the duties of it. This reproach from him should have been spared, when he knew what I had written and published in Boston above five months before the date of his letter to Cunningham, No. XII, the first in which he introduces my name. Mr. Adams had certainly read that publication; for it is the same in which I recited to Governor Sullivan J. Q. Adams's extraordinary sentiment in the embargo question, which I have already stated. Mr. Cunningham (Letter No. XI) asks the causes of my dismissal; which (says he) "I have never seen unfolded, "and which Col. Pickering has nearly pronounced in-  
"explicable;" referring to my last printed letter to Governor Sullivan, which is dated April 22, 1808. The principal object of that letter was, my vindication against

many aspersions on my character. The urgent motives to undertake that vindication are expressed in the following paragraph of the same letter :

“ I am now, sir, far advanced in life. I have children  
 “ and grand-children, who, when I am gone, may hear  
 “ these slanders repeated, and not have the means of  
 “ repelling them. I have, too, some invaluable friends  
 “ in most of the states, and many in that which gave  
 “ me birth ; men who are the ornaments of society and  
 “ of their country. All these, if not my country itself,  
 “ interested as it is in the public concerns on which I  
 “ first addressed you [the embargo] have claims which  
 “ I ought not to leave unsatisfied. Thus called upon  
 “ to vindicate my character, I am constrained to give a  
 “ concise narrative of my public life.”

I shall not trouble the reader with long details. It may suffice to say, That early in 1768, when a marked line was drawn between whigs and tories (the party names of that day) I acted with the former in all the measures of my countrymen, in opposition to British taxation of the colonies—that in my native town I was a member of the various committees raised in that period, to support that opposition ; and that on me devolved all the writing which occasions called for :—That, prior to the war which ensued, I was elected by the freeholders of my native county, Essex, register of deeds—that, after the commencement of hostilities, when Massachusetts organized a provisional government, I was appointed a judge of the county court of common pleas ; and sole judge of the maritime court, to take cognizance of prize causes, pursuant to the resolutions of Congress, for the middle district of Massachusetts, comprehending Boston, Marblehead, Salem, and other ports in Essex. Into these places were brought most of the prizes taken by the armed vessels of Massachusetts. The number of those prizes, while I held the office, (which was until I joined the army under General Washington’s immediate command) amounted to about one hundred and fifty. In the autumn of 1776, the army being greatly reduced, by the

expiration of enlistments, and likely soon to be nearly dissolved, there was a call on Massachusetts for many thousands of her militia. I marched a regiment of seven hundred men from Essex. The tour of duty terminated in New-Jersey, in March 1777. General Washington's head quarters were at Morristown. Some time after my return home, I received from the General an invitation to take the office of adjutant general. In that capacity, I joined the army at Middlebrook about the middle of the month of June. In September happened the battle of Brandywine. Five days afterwards another general action was expected; but, rain coming on, the enemy halted; and, after some skirmishes between the advanced parties, the American army retired. In October the battle of Germantown took place. After the capture of Burgoyne's army, General Washington, reinforced by some brigades from the northern army, took an advantageous position at Whitemarsh, fourteen miles from Philadelphia. In the beginning of December, Sir William Howe led his army from Philadelphia to Chesnut Hill, about three miles from the American army, and on the morning of the third day afterwards advanced, with his whole force, apparently with the expectation, or hope, of drawing Washington from his advantageous position. The advanced parties, and Morgan's rifle regiment, engaged the British advanced parties. Washington retaining his station on the hills, Howe returned to Philadelphia. The American army then marched to Valley Forge, on the western side of the river Schuylkill, and huddled for the winter.

Some two or three months before, Congress had constituted a Board of War. I was appointed one of its members; and took my seat there as soon as a successor in the office of adjutant general was appointed, being the last of January 1778. Judge Peters was a member of the board, and we were joined by Generals Gates and Mifflin: but these two left the board not long afterwards, and the business of it rested chiefly on Mr. Peters and myself. I continued in this station until the



summer of 1780, when General Greene resigned the office of quarter master general. Very unexpectedly, that office was proposed to me, and by Roger Sherman, then a member of Congress; a man whose name, in the annals of his country, will descend to posterity among the names of her eminent patriots and statesmen. Having taken a little time to consider the proposition, I informed him that I would accept the office, should it please Congress to confer it. It was an arduous undertaking, and the more embarrassing because continental paper money was so depreciated as to be hardly worth counting; and Congress had no other funds. Having accepted the office, I addressed a letter to Congress, proposing the expedient of authorizing me to value all services and supplies, in the department, as if to be paid for in specie, and to give certificates therefor, bearing an interest of six per cent. This measure was adopted; and with the aid of these certificates the business of the department, which under the new regulations extended to all the states, was carried on, until that eminent citizen, Robert Morris, appointed superintendent of finance, by his personal credit, furnished, in his own promissory notes, (which foreign loans enabled him to redeem) a medium which passed as cash. I continued in the office of quarter master general to the end of the war.

In the year 1791, President Washington appointed me postmaster general. At the close of the year 1794, General Knox resigned the office of secretary of war, and Washington appointed me his successor. In August 1795, on the resignation of Edmund Randolph, secretary of state, Washington charged me with the business of that department. Some time before the meeting of Congress, which was in December following, the President tendered to me the office of secretary of state: at the same time he frankly told me the names of three highly distinguished citizens, to whom he had offered, but who declined accepting, the office. General Washington knew me well, and that I had not enough of vanity or ambition to be wounded or hum-

bled at the preference given to those gentlemen; they were entitled to it: I only regretted that they declined the office. For myself, I objected, that the duties of the department of state were foreign to my former pursuits in life; and I thought myself unequal to the proper discharge of them. He desired me to take the matter into consideration. When he again spoke to me on the subject, I observed, that although the gentlemen he had named to me had declined the office, yet by a little delay he might find some other candidate to fill it. The session of Congress was approaching. By inquiry among the members he might obtain information of a fit character not then occurring to him; and I requested him to postpone the matter until the meeting of Congress. The President acquiesced. But as soon as Congress assembled—without speaking to me again—he nominated me to be secretary of state; and the Senate approved the nomination.

Now all these important offices, in the general government, were voluntarily conferred upon me; the last, and highest, attended by the singular circumstances I have just stated; and all of them unasked for, in any form whatever. Yet Mr. Adams says, *Pickering was ambitious!* Had I solicited these offices—had I made an interest through my friends, *or intrigued with my enemies*, to obtain them—had I swelled with vanity on their acquisition—I might have been pronounced ambitious. The following are Mr. Adams's words:—  
 “Under the simple appearance of a bald head and  
 “straight hair, and under professions of profound re-  
 “publicanism, he conceals an ardent ambition, envious  
 “of every superior, and impatient of obscurity!”\*

My “bald head and straight hair” are what nature has given me; and I have been content with her arrangements: they are not a fit subject for reproach. Mr. Adams's friend Cunningham reminds him, that it was rather unfortunate for him to attempt to degrade Hamilton, by calling him “the little man;” seeing, though with less flesh, he surpassed in stature both him and

\* Letter XVII, p. 56.

his son.—Of all men living, those who best know me will say, that I am one of the last to whom a disposition in any manner to disguise his sentiments, should be imputed.

Having seen, throughout the “Correspondence,” a series of misrepresentations of comparatively recent events, it cannot surprise one that Mr. Adams should misstate an occurrence fifty or sixty years old. He says, that he was engaged in a cause in which my father was a witness: that “while under examination, though treated with the utmost respect and civility, he broke out, without the smallest provocation, into a rude personal attack upon him,” Mr. Adams.—I know my father’s character too well to give any credit to the latter part of this tale. He was a farmer; yet, bred in the town, his manners were not coarse and rude. It is true that he thought all men were born free and equal; and though indisposed to any act of humiliation to a proud barrister, he would treat his poor neighbour with kindness and civility.—The story admits of an easy solution. It was, I presume, a cross-examination; and that my father’s testimony bore hard upon the cause of Mr. Adams’s client. Then, as it not unfrequently happens, (and I have often thought with too much indulgence from the court) the lawyer brow-beat the witness, with the hope to confound him, in order, amidst his confusion, to produce some change in his language that might lessen or destroy the weight of his testimony. Such, probably, was Mr. Adams’s conduct towards my father; who had discernment enough to perceive the insult, and spirit enough not to let it pass unnoticed.—In commenting upon the testimony, in his argument to the jury, Mr. Adams says he raised a general laugh at my father’s expense. He supposes that I was present; and says “I have never forgiven him.”—Now, whether this miserable tale be true in whole, or in part, or wholly destitute of truth, it is, as to the conclusion, altogether immaterial: for I never heard of it before; nor do I remember a single instance in which my father was examined as a witness in any court. There



was, consequently, no object on account of which, in regard to Mr. Adams, I could impart or withhold forgiveness. My father, at the age of 75, died almost six and forty years ago.

I have mentioned one cause of Mr. Adams's virulent reproaches in giving an account of Mr. Jefferson's embargo. I shall now mention another. His friend Cunningham desires to be informed by Mr. Adams of the causes of his dismissing me from office.\* He eagerly seized the occasion to vent his resentments, while he gratified the extreme curiosity of his friend.

In his first answer,† Mr. Adams says—"Cæsar's wife must not be suspected—was all the reason he gave for repudiating her." [On this reason I make but a single remark, that the familiarity of this same delicate Cæsar, with the other sex, was so notorious, that he was stigmatised as the husband of every woman in Rome.] Mr. Adams proceeds—"Reasons of state are not always to be submitted to newspaper discussions.—It is sufficient for me to say, that I had reasons enough, not only to satisfy me, but to make it my indispensable duty. Reasons which, upon the coolest deliberation, I still approve. I was not so ignorant of Mr. Pickering, his family relations; his political, military and local connexions, as not to be well aware of the consequences to myself. I said at the time, to a few confidential friends, that I signed my own dismissal when I signed his, and that he would rise again, but I should fall forever." [This, I doubt not (the reader will pardon the apparent solecism) was a *prediction after the event*;—Mr. Adams, when he wrote this letter, forgot the date of his prophecy.] "His removal was one of the most deliberate, virtuous and disinterested actions of my life."

On this part of the answer, I must pray the reader to pause for a moment. That there were, in his own views, "reasons of state," I am ready to admit: what they were will by-and-by appear. But his prediction, that for "one of the most deliberate, virtuous and

\* Letter XI, dated Oct. 5, 1803. † Letter XII, Oct. 15, 1803.



“disinterested actions of his life,” “*he* should fall forever”—while *I*, the subject of that act, “should rise again”—appears, among intelligent and virtuous people, really enigmatical. Incapable, as he represents me, on what ground could Mr. Adams predict that I should rise again?—Never in my life did I court popularity, the usual road to honours and employments. Yet I have had many excellent friends, whose approbation has infinitely more than countervailed all the obloquy of which I have been the subject.

Mr. Adams proceeds—“If any future historian should have access to the letter books of the Secretaries of State, and compare Mr. Pickering’s negotiations with England, with those of Mr. Marshall, he will see reasons enough for the exchange of ministers.”

Be it so: but the actual comparison was out of the question when I was removed; *my letters only* being on the books; and Mr. Adams saw very few of them; as he usually passed half the year, enjoying *otium cum dignitate*, at Quincy; and during the sessions of Congress he never called for a letter book to read one of them.—However, he might very well calculate on the superiority to which he refers; as Mr. Marshall’s distinguished talents were well known; and perhaps no one entertains a higher opinion of them than I do. Since we were personally known to each other, I have been happy in receiving uniform testimonies of his friendship and esteem. His elevated and generous mind will derive no pleasure from this contrast.

Mr. Adams again. “In consequence of Mr. Pickering’s removal, I was enabled to negotiate and complete a peace with France, and an amicable settlement with England.”

I do not know what settlement with England he refers to. The difficult question about impressment of seamen was not *then* adjusted; nor in the two next succeeding administrations; though in the latter of them it was one of the *professed* objects of a three years’ war, vastly expensive in money and in human lives: nor is it settled to this day. There was another

subject of dispute with England—the debts incurred by Americans prior to the revolutionary war, and remaining due to British merchants. What negotiations, in this case, were carried on by Mr. Marshall and the British government. I do not know; yet I am sure, that, on the part of Mr. Marshall, they must have been ably conducted: but, nevertheless, they did not effect an “amicable settlement,” as Mr. Adams asserts; nor any settlement at all; unless it was, that the two parties, unable to agree on terms, mutually consented *to let the matter rest*: for an actual settlement was not made until January 1802, near the close of the first year of Mr. Jefferson’s presidency, by a convention negotiated in London, by Rufus King, the American Minister, and the British Secretary of State. This was a compromise about the British debts. It was agreed, as I have already stated, that the United States should pay to his Britannic Majesty, six hundred thousand pounds sterling, (\$2,664,000) for the use of his subjects, creditors to the American ante-revolution debtors, in discharge of those creditors’ claims.—That he was enabled to make peace with France, *in consequence of my removal*, is not true. The Commissioners, Ellsworth and Davie, furnished with full and minute instructions, sailed for France six months before my removal; and my being in or out of office was a matter of perfect indifference in the negotiations, and in their result.

Having so far gratified Cunningham’s eager appetite for secret history, he takes care to keep up the excitement, by saying, near the close of this letter, “But I am not yet to reveal the whole mystery.” Accordingly, in the next letter, No. XIII, Cunningham renews his importunity “to be initiated into the whole mystery,” relating to me.

In his next letter (No. XIV) Mr. Adams adds to the former subjects of negotiation, “discussions of great importance with Spain,” as well as with France and England.—On the discussions with Spain, I can speak with some certainty, having seen Mr. Marshall’s letters to Col. Humphreys, our minister at Madrid. They

were few in number, and treated of the spoliations of our commerce, by the privateers of France and Spain. By both, the captured vessels were carried into the ports of Spain, and there generally condemned, in violation of every law that is held in respect by civilized nations. The case was too plain to require the abilities of Mr. Marshall to discuss it. The chief clerk whom I left in the Department of State, and whom Mr. Marshall retained, was quite competent to that task. The Spanish government was at that time *but partially independent*. French Consuls in her ports erected themselves into tribunals taking cognizance of prize causes. The captures made by Spanish armed vessels, and unlawfully condemned in Spanish courts, were the subject of a treaty afterwards negotiated by Mr. Jefferson's minister to Spain, Charles Pinkney; in which the Spanish government stipulated to make compensation for all which, on due investigation, should be found in that predicament. But the Senate, to whom this treaty was submitted, did not (under an influence easy to divine) advise its ratification. At the next session of Congress, the same treaty was again submitted to the Senate, who then advised its ratification. But it was too late; the Spanish government now refused to ratify. It was rejected by our own government, in the first instance, because the illegal captures and condemnations, by *French armed vessels*, and the *French Consular Tribunals*, were not comprehended, and stipulated to be paid for by *Spain*. She was in fact under *duress* from the French Republic, under whose authority, or efficacious countenance, the French Consular Tribunals were erected. On these three subjects of negotiation, Mr. Adams says "I could get nothing done as I would have it. My new minister, Marshall, did all, to my entire satisfaction."

Mr. Adams was a lawyer, a statesman, a diplomatist, of great experience; and from his abundant resources, ready at his call, it would not be unnatural, or unreasonable, to expect, that, having *endured* his *lame* Secretary so long, he might be willing to lend him some



aid—to suggest at least some leading ideas on the subjects in question: but of these he was certainly very sparing, if he offered any at all. As soon as a session of Congress ended, he hurried away to Quincy, to indulge himself in repose, almost free from the cares of government, and enjoying his office, with its emoluments, nearly as a *sinecure*. At the close of the very important session in July 1798, he posted off without informing any head of department that he was going to leave the seat of government! His son-in-law, Col. Smith, nominated for adjutant general, had recently been negatived by the Senate; and I supposed he departed in a pet. Much in this manner he left the city of Washington, early on the morning of the fourth of March 1801, the day of the inauguration of his successful rival, Thomas Jefferson; vexed and mortified that he was not himself elected to the presidency a second time. Washington stayed in Philadelphia, and, with dignified courtesy, attended the inauguration of Mr. Adams; and afterwards made him a visit at his lodgings, before he departed for Mount Vernon.

So much on the score of *incapacity*, with which I am roundly charged by Mr. Adams. With this, however, great as it may have been, it was somewhat cruel to upbraid me, after what had passed between President Washington and me, when he tendered me the office of Secretary of State, as recited in my letter to Governor Sullivan, which Mr. Adams had read, and which, as already mentioned, caused the out-pouring of his wrath; and after I had held the office a year and a half under Washington, and three years and two months under Adams himself.

If the reader will have the goodness to accompany me, we will now look on the other side of the question.

Mr. Adams having advanced far in gratifying Cunningham's inquiry concerning my dismissal, the itching curiosity of the latter prompts him to solicit further information. "I wish," says he, "my suspicions were obviated or confirmed, that his (Pickering's) far-famed



“report to Congress, on our foreign relations, was not  
 “his own unassisted performance.” There were two  
 reports relating to France. To the first Mr. Cun-  
 ningham must refer. It was in the form of a letter,  
 of great length, dated the 16th of January 1797, ad-  
 dressed to General Pinckney, the American minister  
 at Paris; a copy of which on the 19th of that month,  
 was communicated by Washington to Congress; by  
 whose order it was printed. It made a pamphlet of a  
 hundred pages. Mr. Adams had satisfactory reasons  
 to know, that it was my own composition; but he care-  
 fully avoided answering Cunningham’s importunate de-  
 sire of information on this point; it would have pre-  
 sented a contradiction to his numerous vilifying re-  
 proaches. This report was the result of a thorough  
 and laborious investigation, which enabled me to con-  
 clude with the following inferences :

“From the foregoing statement we trust it will ap-  
 “pear, That there has been no attempt in the govern-  
 “ment of the United States to violate our treaty, or  
 “weaken our engagements with France : That what-  
 “ever resistance it has opposed to the measures of her  
 “agents, the maintenance of the laws and sovereignty  
 “of the United States and their neutral obligations  
 “rendered indispensable : That it has never acquiesced  
 “in any acts violating our rights, or interfering with  
 “the advantages stipulated to France ; but, on the con-  
 “trary, has opposed them by all the means in its pow-  
 “er : That it has withheld no succours from France,  
 “that were compatible with the duties of neutrality to  
 “grant. That, as well by their independent political  
 “rights, as by the express provisions of the commer-  
 “cial treaty with France, the United States were at  
 “full liberty to enter into commercial treaties with any  
 “other nation, and consequently with Great-Britain :  
 “That no facts manifesting a partiality to that country  
 “have been, and I add, that none such can be, pro-  
 “duced.

“Of the propriety and justness of these conclusions,  
 “you will endeavour to satisfy the French govern-

“ment: and, conscious of the rectitude of our own  
 “proceedings, during the whole course of the present  
 “war, we cannot but entertain the most sanguine ex-  
 “pectations that they will be satisfied. We even hope  
 “that this has been already accomplished; and that  
 “you will be saved from the pain of renewing a dis-  
 “cussion, which the government has entered upon  
 “with regret. Your mission and instructions prove its  
 “solicitude to have prevented its necessity, and the  
 “sincerity of its present hopes, that your endeavours,  
 “agreeably to those instructions, ‘to remove jealousies,  
 “and obviate complaints, by showing that they were  
 “groundless—to restore confidence, so unfortunately  
 “and injuriously impaired—to explain the relative in-  
 “terests of both countries, and the real sentiments of  
 “your own,’ have been attended with success. And,  
 “as a consequence thereof, we rely on the repeal of  
 “the decrees and orders which expose our com-  
 “merce to indefinite injuries, which militate with the  
 “obligations of treaties, and our rights as a neutral na-  
 “tion.”

Of the nature and character of this letter to General Pinckney, I can desire no higher or better opinion than Chief Justice Marshall’s. In his *Life of Washington*, Vol. V, p. 725, he gives the following account of it:

“Early in the session (1797) the President commu-  
 “nicated to Congress, in a special message, the com-  
 “plaints alleged by the representative of the French  
 “republic against the government of the United States.  
 “These complaints embracing most of the transactions  
 “of the legislative and executive departments in rela-  
 “tion to the belligerent powers, a particular and care-  
 “ful review of almost every act of the administration,  
 “which could affect those powers, became indispensa-  
 “ble. The principal object for the mission of General  
 “Pinckney to Paris having been to make to the Execu-  
 “tive Directory those full and fair explanations of the  
 “principles and conduct of the American government,  
 “which, by removing such prejudices and jealousies  
 “as were founded on misconception, might restore that

“harmony between the two republics which the President had at all times anxiously sought to preserve, this review was addressed to that minister. It presented a minute and comprehensive detail of all the points of controversy which had arisen between the two nations, and defended the measures which had been adopted in America, with a clearness and a strength of argument believed to be irresistible. To place the subject in a point of view admitting of no possible misunderstanding, the Secretary of State had annexed to his own full and demonstrative reasoning, documents establishing the real fact in each particular case, and the correspondence relating to it.”

The other report I addressed to President Adams himself, on the 18th of January 1799, to be communicated to Congress. On the 21st he made the communication, with the following message addressed to the two Houses :

“According to an intimation in my message of Friday last, I now lay before Congress a Report of the Secretary of State, containing his observations on some of the documents which attended it.”

These documents consisted of a letter, dated June 25, 1798, from me to Mr. Gerry, then in Paris ; of a very long letter from him to me, dated Oct. 1, 1798, at Nantasket Road, the lower harbour of Boston, where he had just arrived from France ; prepared, of course, on his voyage ; and studiously framed, to put the best face possible on his transactions with the French minister Talleyrand, after his colleagues, Pinckney and Marshall, had been obliged to leave Paris ; and of a mass of papers, numbered from one to thirty-five. To these I added two or three letters from Fulwar Skipwith, consul general of the United States at Paris, and some papers received by him from the French minister, after Mr. Gerry left that city. These were the documents referred to by Mr. Adams, in his message to Congress, on which I made my report ; which occupies a pamphlet of 45 pages, published by order of the House of Representatives.



To understand perfectly, and justly to estimate, the conduct of the United States government, in relation to France, during the administrations of Presidents Washington and Adams, one must read the correspondences between the Department of State and the French ministers to the United States, Genet, Fauchet and Adet; and the letters and reports of the secretaries of state, on the subjects in controversy between the two Republics. This, perhaps, will hardly be undertaken by any one, excepting the historian who shall minutely investigate the public transactions of that period. Chief Justice Marshall, when writing the Life of Washington, read, as he once told me, the immense mass of letters and papers left by him, in relation to all his public transactions, during the long periods in which he was engaged in the service of his country; and the reader has seen, in the extract from the Life of Washington, that all the acts of his administration, in relation to France, received, in the opinion of the chief justice, a complete vindication, in my letter of January 16th, 1797, to General Pinckney. My report to Mr. Adams, of January 18th, 1799, was intended, by an exhibition of the subsequent unjust, tyrannical and profligate conduct of the French government, to justify our own government in all its measures towards the French Republic, whether in its attempts to conciliate by negotiation, or of armed defence against her wanton and outrageous hostilities. The examination of Mr. Gerry's budget of documents, which constituted the basis of that report, led me to remark, That the points, chiefly meriting attention, were the attempts of the French government,

1. To exculpate itself from the charge of corruption as having demanded a *douceur* of fifty thousand pounds sterling (222,000 dollars) for the pockets of the Directors and Ministers of the Republic, as represented in the despatches of our envoys :

2. To detach Mr. Gerry from his colleagues, and to inveigle him into a separate negotiation; and

3. Its design, if the negotiation failed, and a war should take place between the United States and France, to throw the blame of the rupture on the United States.



The report does not admit of an abridgement. I can introduce only its concluding observations, the result of my examination. They are these: "The French government, by always abstaining from making specific demands of damages—by refusing to receive our ministers—by at length proposing to negotiate, in a mode which it knew to be impracticable, with the person who had no powers, and who therefore constantly refused to negotiate, and thus wholly avoiding a negotiation—has kept open the field for complaints of wrongs and injuries, in order, by leaving them undefined, to furnish pretences for unlimited depredations. In this way it 'determined to fleece us.' In this way it gratified its *avarice* and *revenge*; and it hoped also to satiate its *ambition*. After a long series of insults unresented, and a patient endurance of injuries aggravated in their nature and unexampled in their extent, that government expected our final submission to its will. Our resistance has excited its surprise, and as certainly increased its resentment. With some soothing expressions, is heard the voice of wounded pride. Warmly expressing its desire of reconciliation, it gives no evidence of its sincerity; but proofs in abundance demonstrate that it is not sincere. From standing erect, and in that commanding attitude requiring implicit obedience—cowering, it renounces some of its unfounded demands. But I hope we shall remember, 'that the tiger crouches, before he leaps upon his prey.'"

Of the truth of this report—its conformity to facts—and the correctness of the inferences—Mr. Adams must at that time have been satisfied; or he would not have communicated it to Congress. It is true he calls the report *the observations of the secretary of state*; but they were the secretary's observations after passing Mr. Adams's examination and *expurgation*; that is, after he had marked a number of sentences to be struck out, because they bore somewhat hardly on the conduct of his friend and favourite minister, Mr. Gerry; who, it must be confessed, appears as a principal actor, and

the hero of the report. But, after this expurgation, all that remained must be considered as having his approbation. But it happens to be in my power to present the reader with the opinion of a perfectly competent and impartial judge. In searching among my papers, I have found the following letter from General (now chief justice) Marshall to me, which I trust he will excuse my presenting to the public, seeing it is material to my vindication from Mr. Adams's aspersions on this particular subject. Readers will be pleased to recollect, that General Marshall, having been one of the envoys to the French republic, with Mr. Gerry, was perfectly acquainted with the characters of the Directory and their minister Talleyrand; and, comparing the management of this minister with Mr. Gerry with the occurrences under the direction of the same minister, during the six months that Marshall and Pinckney had stayed in Paris, was perfectly competent to form a correct judgment.

#### GENERAL MARSHALL'S LETTER TO T. PICKERING.

“ *Richmond, Feb. 19, '99.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ An occasional absence from Richmond suspended for some time my acknowledgment of the receipt of your *very correct* analysis and able commentary on the late negotiation with France. I wish it could be read more generally than I fear it will be.

“ I am grieved rather than surprised at Mr. Gerry's letter. To my comprehension, the evidence, on which his judgment is formed, positively contradicts the opinion he has given us. From what facts he infers the pacific temper of the French government, I am unable to conjecture. That France is not desirous of immediate war with America, is obvious; that is, of *reciprocal war*—for she has been long making it on us; but, that any indications appear of a disposition for a solid accommodation, on terms such as America can accede to, is by no means to be admitted.

“ It is strange that Mr. Gerry should state the negotiation to have been in a fair train when intelligence of the publication of the despatches arrived in Paris; while he represents Mr. Talleyrand as having declined entering on the proposed treaty, until he could know the temper of our government on the communications that had been made, which communications related chiefly to money; and while also he states Mr. Talleyrand to declare, that he had never approved of sending a minister to the United States.

I am, &c.

J. MARSHALL.

Every reader acquainted with the character of General Marshall (and who in the United States, at all conversant in public affairs, is a stranger to it?) will be satisfied that my report, as communicated to Congress by Mr. Adams himself, far from containing any thing exceptionable, merits approbation. Fortunately it is in my power to show, that the passages struck from the original draught are alike unexceptionable. These I have exhibited in the section on Elbridge Gerry, from a press copy found among my papers, with all the parts to be expunged, according to the President's direction, included between brackets. I am aware that these minute details may, at this day, excite little interest; and I would not invite attention to them, had they not been rendered important by Mr. Adams, in making my original report the basis of a malicious slander.

Every American who lived in the days of the French republic, particularly in the years 1796, 7, 8 and 9, or who, by a little reading, has become acquainted with the transactions of that period, will remember the familiar use of the letters X, Y, and Z, in relation to those transactions. Those letters have often been repeated ludicrously, even as though they represented fictitious characters; whereas, in decyphering the voluminous despatches of our envoys, Pinckney, Marshall and Gerry, I substituted, for a reason to be herein after mentioned, those letters for the names of persons introduced to our envoys in Paris; whither they had been sent, and where they waited patiently for six months, for the purpose of effecting an amicable settlement of all differences between the United States and the French Republic; which differences, by the government of that republic, in the hands of a Five-Headed Executive, called the "Directory," were made the pretences for a scene of piracies, in kind never surpassed, in extent never equalled, by the barbarous Mahometan Regencies of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli. On the arrival of our envoys at Paris, "cards of hospitality" were sent to them, to entitle them to stay there unmolested by the police.



They delivered to Mr. Talleyrand,\* minister for foreign affairs, copies of their letters of credence ; and rightfully expected to be soon presented to the Directory, by its minister. But they were not presented—they were never admitted to the presence of that haughty and insolent Executive. The arms of France had subjected Holland, Spain, Portugal, and the minor powers conveniently within their reach ; and even Austria was compelled to make peace. All the subject nations were treated with little ceremony ; and some with utter contempt ; to which they submitted. The Directory expected a like humble submission from the United States. In this they were encouraged by their knowledge of a powerful party which from the beginning were opposed to the federal administration under Washington, and who persisted in their opposition during the continued federal administration of government under his successor Mr. Adams. Few, if any, important acts of the federal administrations, prior to the year 1799, escaped opposition from that party, of which Mr. Jefferson was the reputed, and undoubtedly the actual, head and oracle. This party vehemently opposed even the building of two or three frigates, which were necessary to protect our commerce from the Algerines ! those frigates which, were the commencement of that navy which, in the late war having saved the administration from political perdition, has now become a favourite with the government, as well as with the people.

Instead of admitting our envoys to an audience with the Directory, their minister, Mr. Talleyrand, employed certain agents to make overtures—to inform them of the temper of the Directory towards the United States, as filled with resentment, on account of some expressions in President Adams's speech to Congress, in which he noticed the offensive discrimination made by the French government, between the people of the

\* This is the same extraordinary personage who, under the title of Prince Talleyrand, made an important figure for some years under the Emperor Bonaparte, and since in the court of Louis the Eighteenth.



United States and their government, in the last public audience given to Mr. Monroe, minister from the United States, on his taking leave of the Directory, in the year 1796.

The parts of the President's speech, with which the Directory affected to be offended, regarded chiefly the speech of the President of the Directory to Mr. Monroe. Mr. Adams said (and most truly) that it was marked with indignities towards the government of the United States. "It evinced," said he, "a disposition to separate the people of the United States from their government; to persuade them that they have different affections, principles and interests from those of their fellow-citizens whom they themselves had chosen to manage their common concerns; and thus to produce divisions fatal to our peace."—But not the government only was reproached; the whole people of the United States were insulted in the speech to Mr. Monroe: "They," (said the President Barras) "always proud of their liberty, *will never forget that they owe it to France.*" A generous friend, who had conferred the greatest benefit, even at the hazard of life, on another, would never boast of it; much less would he tauntingly remind the latter of his obligations.

I have suggested, that the resentment of the Directory against the American government was merely *affected*, for the purpose now to be explained.

Had there existed in the Directory a particle of honesty or honour, and had there been any solid grounds for complaint against the United States, our envoys would have been at once admitted to an audience; commissioners would have been appointed to negotiate on all the topics of complaint; all differences would have been settled, and harmony and good will restored. But the French government had no just ground for even one of their complaints. Such was the opinion of well informed men at the time; and such, the reader has seen, was the deliberate opinion of the enlightened citizen, Chief Justice Marshall, formed several years

afterwards, on an examination of all the public documents, aided by his own personal knowledge, relating to the subject.

Why then, was there such a loud and long continued clamour of the French government against the United States ; especially against their government ? I shall not attempt to enumerate all the causes. Those who conducted the affairs of France, doubtless, wished to involve the United States in the war commenced with England in 1793. But the President (Washington) after the most mature consultation with the members of the administration, consisting of Jefferson, Hamilton, Knox and Randolph, determined that it was the right, as well as the interest, of the United States, to remain at peace ; and, in pursuance of this determination, he issued his proclamation of neutrality, and enjoined upon the citizens of the United States an observance of all the duties of neutrality. The exactness with which the Executive endeavoured to secure and enforce their observance offended the government of France.

Having a serious controversy with Great-Britain on subjects arising out of the existing war, as well as claims of vast importance resulting from the treaty of peace of 1783, the government of the United States, instead of plunging the country into an expensive and bloody war, sought redress by an amicable negotiation. Success attended the pacific measure. By mutual stipulations, provision was made for adjusting all the matters in dispute between the two nations for which the mission was instituted. Of this treaty the French government loudly complained ; and *pretended* that it contravened some of the articles of our commercial treaty with France. There was no foundation for this complaint ; the treaty with Great-Britain (well known by the name of Jay's treaty) containing an article, introduced by Mr. Jay, for the express purpose of securing to France and other nations, with whom we had engaged in treaties, the perfect enjoyment of every right and privilege to which those treaties entitled them. The real cause of French clamour about this treaty was,

*that it prevented a war between the United States and her most hated enemy, Great-Britain.* The French government pretended, that some articles in the British treaty gave that nation advantages not secured to France by our commercial treaty with her. To remove this ground of complaint, though under no obligation to do it, we offered to change our stipulations with her which she said operated to her disadvantage—or to make an entire new treaty, to give to her every advantage which accrued to Great-Britain by any article in Jay's treaty. But the French government evaded every offer we could make : it would not negotiate—it would not receive our envoys commissioned for the sole purpose of adjusting, by an amicable negotiation, every point in dispute between France and the United States. She had for two years been carrying on a piratical war against our commerce ; to which we had made no armed resistance, and which therefore she preferred to mutual peace ; presuming, that while so many nations, subdued by her arms, humbly submitted to their fate, the United States would be alike subservient. Threats, corresponding with these expectations, were thrown out, indirectly, to intimidate our envoys, to induce them to yield to her demands ; a compliance with which would have furnished to her enemy, Great-Britain, a just cause of war. Those threats made no impression on our envoys. They persevered in their attempts to bring on a negotiation ; if with little hope of success, at least with the expectation of such a development of the character and views of the French government, as would satisfy the people of the United States, strongly prejudiced in favour of France, that no treaty with her, compatible with the interest, the honour and the independence of the United States, was practicable. This was sufficiently ascertained some time before Pinckney and Marshall quitted Paris ; and at an earlier day they would have sent their final letter to the French minister, but were delayed by Mr. Gerry ; on whom, in private conferences, Talleyrand had made



impressions favourable to the designs of the Directory ; as will be more particularly related in another place. The Directory and Talleyrand expected to engage him singly to enter on a negotiation, and to impose on him such terms of a treaty as would suit their own and the interests of France ; such unequal terms as they had been accustomed to impose on the vassal nations around them, and which, once stipulated by Mr. Gerry, and favoured by the whole party opposed to the federal administration, which was relied upon as partial to France, they presumed the American government would not dare to reject.

In the same letter, No. XI, dated Oct. 5, 1808, in which Cunningham desires Mr. Adams to inform him of the causes of my removal, he says, That when in Philadelphia, soon afterwards, he was told, that when another mission to the French Republic was concluded on [meaning that which was commenced by the nomination of Mr. Murray] “ my aversions to any farther negotiations with France were so untameable, and so indecorously expressed, as to render me an unfit medium for the communications between the two governments, and unsuitable to remain in a ministerial station.” In the answer of Mr. Adams (Letter No. XII, Oct. 15) he says, “ The reason you heard in Philadelphia was quite sufficient, if there had been no other ; but there were many other and much stronger reasons.” All I need say on this reason is—that it is a *nonentity*. And if Mr. Adams, in cases where his resentments are operating, were capable of any just reflection, he would have been ashamed to have adopted it ; for he continued me in office almost fifteen months after the institution of the mission ; viz. from February 18, 1799, the day he nominated Mr. Murray, until the 12th of May, 1800, when he sent me my dismissal.

In his letter XVII, Mr. Adams mentions, as an evidence of my incompetency for the Department of State, and consequently to justify my removal, that when in the Senate of the United States, I was almost



always in a minority of two, three, four or five, in 34. This Mr. Adams has said, as he has said many other things, at random, without examination; which shows how little his naked assertions are to be relied on. The number of federal senators was small; and therefore, on questions in which the different principles or views of the two parties were affected, federal members would of course be in the minority. But I had the curiosity to look into the journal of the first session (1803-4) in which J. Q. Adams and I were in the Senate; and in making a list of the instances when the questions were decided by yeas and nays, I found that he was seven times in the majority and nineteen times in the minority; while I was eight times only in the minority and twenty times in the majority; and more than forty times we voted on the same side. I presume (for it is too trifling a matter to be critically examined) that we continued for the most part voting together, until Mr. Adams began to change his course, and finally joined the strongest side. But if a want of talents commensurate with the duties of the office of Secretary of State rendered me unfit to retain it, why did he suffer me to hold it so long? Did it require three years and two months for a person of his knowledge, discernment and experience (which he certainly believed were not surpassed, if equalled, in any man in the United States) to make the discovery? And if he had made it, even by the end of one year, where was his regard to his official duty, in letting the public interests suffer, above two years more, and at a most critical period, through my incompetency?

In his letter No. XXVI, (February 11, 1809) Mr. Adams is pleased to give me rank with three men whose names are familiarly known throughout the United States—Shays, who headed the dangerous insurrection in Massachusetts—Gallatin, a reputed leader in the Whiskey insurrection in Pennsylvania—and Fries, the author of the second insurrection in the same state, in the time of Mr. Adams's presidency. These three instances of *treason*, the highest crime which a citizen

can commit, he lowers to a small offence—"a disturbance"!—But he had pardoned Fries! (the mode and the apparent motive will be explained.) And what a cruel thing it would have been to have hung a poor man, only for *disturbing* the tranquillity of a state! This same Fries, however, was *convicted* of *treason*, before the court in which that very able and learned judge, Samuel Chase, presided—the judge whom Mr. Adams calls his friend, and on whom he has pronounced a lofty eulogy. Associating me with the three persons first above named, Mr. Adams asks—"And why may we not have a Pickering's disturbance?" This idea of Mr. Adams's was suggested, perhaps, by some expressions in his son's letter to Mr. Otis; in which he wished to have it believed that my opposition to Mr. Jefferson's embargo law, after it was passed—even so far as my letter to Governor Sullivan was in opposition—was unwarrantable. From this wanton charge, basely insinuated, my *political enemies* will not think any defence to be necessary. However, I will refer to my letter itself, to Governor Sullivan, on which the insinuation rests, for a vindication. I need recite only the last sentence of my letter on the embargo (for which I had shown there was no adequate cause) in which I say, "Regardless of personal consequences, I have undertaken to communicate these details; with the view "to dissipate dangerous illusions; to give to my constituents correct information; to excite inquiry; and "to rouse that vigilant jealousy which is characteristic "of **REPUBLICANS**, and essential to the preservation of "their rights, their liberties, and their independence." In another part of the same letter, I said, "Nothing "but the sense of the commercial states, clearly and "emphatically expressed, will save them from ruin." Of such sentiments I have no reason to be ashamed; and to have expressed them in the most public manner, is not a subject of regret: they will receive the approbation of every independent mind. But if high authority were necessary to justify them, I would cite that of the same eminent lawyer and upright judge.

Samuel Chase:—"To oppose (says he) a depending measure, by endeavouring to convince the public that it is improper, and ought not to be adopted; *or to promote the repeal of a law already past, by endeavouring to convince the public that it ought to be repealed*, and that such men ought to be elected to the legislature as will repeal it; *to attempt, in fine, the correction of public measures, by arguments tending to show their improper nature or destructive tendency*, never has been or can be considered as sedition, in any country where the principles of law and liberty are respected; but it is the proper and usual exercise of that right of opinion and speech which constitutes the distinguishing feature of free government."\*

In the same letter, No. XXVI, Mr. Adams says "I have a few sheets of paper written on a point on which I differed formerly and latterly with our angry Senator, *and which was one of the causes of his removal*; which I will send you, provided you will previously give me your honour that you will return it after you have read it, without taking a copy." I can only conjecture what was the subject of these "sheets of paper;"—that it was the impressing of British seamen from neutral merchant vessels. In his letter No. XXXII, March 4, 1809, Mr. Adams encloses five sheets, "the rough draft," which Cunningham had promised to return. "I shall burn it," says Mr. Adams, "because I have made another copy more correct, in which I have left out the name, and much of the trumpery." I now recollect reading, about that time, an anonymous publication on the subject of impressments; and that it was ascribed to President Adams as the writer. But I have no recollection of ever discussing with Mr. Adams the principle involved in the question of impressments; and it is incredible that it should have been a cause of my removal. It is to be placed, with many other pretended causes, to *after*

\* From the answer of Judge Chase to the articles of impeachment against him in 1805.



*thoughts* ; when, as in the case of instituting the mission to France, he was straining his wits to discover and disclose reasons, if they bore only "the plausible appearance of probability" of satisfying public or individual inquirers.

I believe I have now exhibited all the *alleged* causes of my removal from office—except the indefinite one, "Reasons of State," but which (see letter XII) Mr. Adams says, "are not always to be submitted to newspaper discussion." Of these I have promised to take some notice ; and here they are. After the perusal, readers will not wonder that Mr. Adams should be unwilling to subject them to newspaper discussion. An extract from General Hamilton's letter, published in 1800, "concerning the public conduct and character of John Adams, Esq. President of the United States," will be a proper introduction to the evidence in the case. Referring to the removal of M<sup>r</sup>. Henry and myself, Hamilton says, "It happened at a peculiar juncture, immediately after the unfavourable turn" [unfavourable to Mr. Adams] "of the election in New-York ; and had much the air of an explosion of combustible materials which had been long prepared, but which had been kept down by prudential calculations respecting the effect of an explosion upon the friends of those ministers in the State of New-York. Perhaps, when it was supposed that nothing could be lost in this quarter, and that something might be gained elsewhere, *by an atoning sacrifice of those ministers, especially Mr. Pickering*, who had been for some time particularly odious to the opposition party, it was determined to proceed to extremities." The reader will compare this with the following details.

Hazen Kimball, a very worthy man, had been a clerk in my office. After quitting the office he settled in Savannah. In 1803, being in Massachusetts, and calling to see me, he gave me information relative to my dismissal, which I had not expected. Meeting him afterwards at Washington (where I was attending as a



member of the Senate) I desired him to commit that information to writing; which he did as in the following certificate:

"At a public table, McLaughlin's tavern, in Georgetown, July, 1800, I heard Elias B. Caldwell say, that some time in May preceding, he was present in a public room at Annapolis, when Mr. Smith, the present secretary of the navy, made the following declaration: That we (meaning the democratic party) have been sent down to (from Philadelphia) to know on what terms we would support Mr. Adams at the next presidential election. In our answer, among other conditions, was the dismissal of Colonel Pickering from the office of secretary of state: but he has delayed it till he lost all hopes of his election by the strength of his own party, and now we do not thank him for it.

"I have shown this statement to Mr. Caldwell, who says, if it does not contain the precise words of Mr. Smith, that it is substantially correct.

"Mr. Caldwell further says, that Mr. Smith said, in the same public manner, that he knew Colonel Pickering would be dismissed some time before it took place.

HAZEN KIMBALL."

"City of Washington, 29th Dec. 1803."

Having learnt that Thomas C. Bowie, Esq. of Prince George's county, Maryland, (whom I did not personally know, but who was named to me as "a gentleman of high respectability, who had retired from the bar,") had had a very particular conversation with Robert Smith, on the subject stated in the above certificate, I took the liberty, in April, 1810, of addressing a letter to him, with a copy of the certificate. The following extracts from his answer are all that particularly apply to the case in question.

*Extracts of a letter, dated April 16, 1810, from Thomas C. Bowie, Esq. to Timothy Pickering.*

"I assure you, sir, it will be a source of much gratification, if any thing in my power can contribute, in the smallest degree, to the exposure of those gross and palpable delusions which have been so long imposed upon the American people, by the abettors of democracy in regard to your public character."—[Then noticing my official publications relative to our rulers, and their management of the affairs of the United States, Mr. Bowie says,] "In order to impair the effect and universal conviction which they had begun to operate in almost every section of the country, it was soon found necessary to make you the incessant theme of the most bitter invective and vulgar abuse."—"It is impossible for you, sir, to have any adequate idea of the very ungenerous, and I may say wicked, expedients resorted to by the democrats in relation to this subject."

"I certainly did hear Mr. Secretary Smith make the declaration contained in the certificate of Mr. Kimball. A few days before the account of your dismissal arrived at Annapolis, I repaired thither, attending the General Court, having just commenced the practice of the law: and, having studied in Baltimore with Judge Chase and Mr. Martin, I was well acquainted with Mr. Robert Smith, and the Baltimore Bar generally, with whom I messed in No. 2, at Wharfe's tavern, although then a resident of Prince George's county. One morning, while in bed, Mr. Smith remarked, that in a few days the federalists would receive from the seat of government a piece of intelligence which would both surprise and alarm them. He would not impart what it was, but requested me to *notice* his prediction. When the mail brought the news of your dismissal, Mr. Smith told me it was *that* to which he alluded; and he supposed I would admit he had some knowledge of cabinet secrets."—"I had understood, a short time previous, that Mr. Adams was negotiating with the leading republican members of the House of Representatives, a coalition which went to secure his twenty-five thousand dollars (a year) at the expense of what he himself had deemed the public good, but a little time before: that General Smith, and other leading democratic members, were, on the eve of Mr. Adams's expected re-election, frequently dining and visiting at his house, and who before that time had never been in the habit of either."

The fact, that I was to be removed, being known among the democrats, while federalists were ignorant of it, is an irrefragable evidence of the intrigue between Mr. Adams and the democrats, to which my removal is to be ascribed.

The reader now sees, in the compass of two or three pages, the real cause of my removal by Mr. Adams; "the reasons of state," not to be submitted to newspaper discussion. If this statement is sufficient to shock every honest and honourable man, what will be his feelings when he compares it with this solemn declaration of Mr. Adams, in his letter No. XII, Oct. 15, 1808, when speaking of me? "His removal was one of the "most deliberate, virtuous and disinterested actions of "my life"—And again, on the 25th of November following (letter No. XVII) he calls it "one of the most "virtuous actions of his life"!

Mr. Kimball's certificate, and the extracts from Mr. Bowie's letter, with observations, I published thirteen years ago; only in the certificate I then, of my own accord, left blanks where I have now introduced, as in

the original, the name of Mr. Caldwell. He is the respectable citizen, Elias B. Caldwell, Esq. of the city of Washington, and clerk of the courts there. He also knows the excellent character sustained by Mr. Bowie.

At the time of the former publication (March 1811) I made the following, among other, reflections on this transaction :—"When a man has, at one period of his life, distinguished himself by his public services, it is distressing to find and exhibit him, as capable of straying from the straight path of integrity and truth; for it tends to excite suspicions and jealousies towards the most upright and inflexibly just."

In another part of this Review, I mention the efforts made by Mr. Adams to justify his unadvised institution of a mission to the French Republic, in February 1799, when he nominated Mr. Murray *sole* commissioner to negotiate a treaty with its rulers—"men so bold, so cunning and so false." But as that mission appears to have had an origin similar to that of my removal—if it was not a part, and indeed the important part, of the original intrigue—I shall here introduce what has come to my knowledge concerning it.

In the year 1815, in conversing with some of my friends, of whom the late Thomas P. Grosvenor, a Representative in Congress from the State of New-York, was one, I said, that for a considerable time I had been endeavouring to make some discovery as to the origin of that mission: and that I suspected it to be the same with that of my removal—an intrigue between Mr. Adams and the opposition, or democrats. Grosvenor instantly answered in these words: "Why that was the fact: John Nicholas told Judge Van Ness the whole story, and laughed at Mr. Adams's credulity."

John Nicholas was a Virginian, and for several years a member of Congress, in Washington's administration, and firmly in opposition. At length he removed to the State of New-York; where, as I have understood, he was appointed a Judge of the Court of the County in which he resided, and a Senator for the District, in the Senate of that State. Judge Van Ness was the late

William P. Van Ness, of the Supreme Court of New-York.

Here the matter rested for some years ; after which, being in company with a number of members of Congress, and the conversation turning on some past events, particularly the mission to France in 1799, in the midst of our successful naval hostilities with that power—without the previous mention of it by the President to any head of a department, or to any federalist in or out of Congress, as far as was then known—one of the gentlemen said, that when John Dennis\* returned from Congress, after that session, he said in his hearing, and in the hearing of many others, That a Committee of Three waited on Mr. Adams, and told him, that if he would institute a mission to make peace with France, and dismiss the Secretary of War, Mr. M'Henry, and of State, Mr. Pickering, they would not oppose—or they would support—his re-election to the Presidency. Immediately afterwards, I mentioned this information to another member, of my acquaintance : he confirmed it as received by him from another source ; and named for his author the same gentleman, a member of Congress in 1799, who, the late Gouverneur Morris once told me, negotiated my removal.

The veil being now taken off from the two acts of President Adams, of which no federalist could give a satisfactory solution, the embarrassments attending his laborious attempts to justify those acts, and his glaring inconsistencies, are easily accounted for. The fruits of his toil on these subjects, as displayed in the letters published in 1809 in the Boston Patriot, and those written in 1808 and 1809 to Cunningham, and lately published by Cunningham's son, would cover nearly a hundred printed pages in octavo ; whereas, had they originated in considerations purely public, the honest and satisfactory truth might have been expressed in a single page. TRUTH alone is clear and consistent.

With respect to the French mission—at one time Mr. Adams says, the information derived from his min-

\* Mr. Dennis was a representative from the Eastern shore of Maryland.



ister, Mr. Gerry, formed a full and complete basis on which to institute the mission. Yet, in December, 1793, after he had been for above two months in possession of all that information, and of more, of one kind and another—in addressing Congress, he said, “To send another minister, without more determinate assurances that he would be received, would be an act of humiliation to which the United States ought not to submit:” and on the 12th of that month, in answer to an address from the Senate, he said, “I have seen no real evidence of any change of system or disposition in the French Republic towards the United States.” At other times, Talleyrand’s letter to Pichon, who communicated it to Mr. Murray, furnished the assurances he had required, of the due reception of an envoy. Mr. Adams’s words are, “This letter was transmitted by Mr. Murray to the American government, and I own I am not acquainted with any words, either in the French or English language, which could have expressed in a more solemn, a more explicit, or a more decided manner, assurances of all that I had demanded as conditions of negotiation.”\* Yet, when, ten years before, he nominated Mr. Murray to the Senate, and sent them a copy of Talleyrand’s letter, he declares to that body (in order to conciliate and obtain their approbation) that Mr. Murray “shall not go to France without *direct* and *unequivocal* assurances from the French government, signified by their minister of foreign relations, that he shall be received in character.”

I have said, that Mr. Gerry’s long letter to me, dated Oct. 1, 1793, in the harbour of Boston, on the morning of his arrival, was written on his passage from France, and studiously prepared, to put the best face on his conduct while in Paris. In that letter he says, “Before the arrival of the despatches of the envoys, the minister [Talleyrand] appeared to me sincere, and anxious to obtain a reconciliation.” And again, “On the 26th of July I left Paris; and from the best in-

\* Letter III, dated April 1809, published by Mr. Adams in the Boston Patriot.

“formation which I could obtain relative to the disposition of the Executive Directory (for I never had any direct communication with them) they were very desirous of a reconciliation between the republics.” All this is very courteous and charitable towards the French rulers and their minister Talleyrand, from whom he had received, and with tame submission, the most pointed insults. But see his language eleven years afterwards, when his former communications were not recollected, or were forgotten, *and when he expressed his real sentiments—the same that remained stamped on his mind from the deep impressions made upon it by the actual occurrences in Paris.* These sentiments are found in his letter dated at Cambridge, in July, 1809, addressed to Mr. Talleyrand, and published, with Mr. Adams’s letter, in the Boston Patriot of August 26. It was written in reference to one of Talleyrand’s letters to Pichon (that dated August 28, 1798) which also Mr. Adams had published in the Boston Patriot. This letter contained an expression somewhat contemptuous, in regard to his friend and “his minister,” Mr. Gerry, at which he took offence. Talleyrand said, “I wished to encourage Mr. Gerry by testimonies of regard, that his good intentions merited, although I could not dissemble that he wanted decision at a moment when he might have easily adjusted every thing. It does not thence follow that I designated him: *I will even avow that I think him too irresolute to be fit to hasten the conclusion of an affair of this kind.*” On this Mr. Gerry makes a pointed appeal to Talleyrand: “Let any candid man read our correspondence, and declare, if he can, *that your propositions were not altogether vague, from the beginning to the end.*”

I have one more case to mention, on which I shall be sparing of comments, and content myself with a brief statement of facts: it is the case of Fries, of Pennsylvania, twice convicted of treason; the second time on a new trial, ordered on a supposed incorrectness discovered after the first conviction, and allowed by

the court, though not affecting the facts on which the prosecution had taken place, nor the construction of the law applied to the facts; in other words, not affecting the merits of the case. Judge Iredell, of the Supreme Court of the United States, presided on the first trial, and was assisted by Judge Peters, the District Judge of Pennsylvania. At the second trial, Judge Chase presided, and Judge Peters sat with him. The first trial had occupied nine days. Judge Chase considered, that much irrelevant matter had been suffered to be introduced in the first trial, in respect to cases in English books, occurring in times and under circumstances which rendered them inadmissible on trials for treason under the Constitution of the United States; and made known this opinion, in writing, that such cases would not be permitted to be introduced in the trial of Fries. Upon this, William Lewis and A. J. Dallas, of counsel for Fries, refused to act; and advised Fries not to accept of any other counsel, should the court offer to assign any; which advice Fries accepted. On the 24th of April, 1800, the trial commenced. On the evening of the second day, the evidence was closed; and the court charged the jury; who, retiring for two hours, brought in a verdict of guilty.\* On the second day of May, (the last day of the session) Fries was brought into court, and received sentence of death.

Mr. Lewis, in his deposition (to be used on the impeachment of Judge Chase) states, that, soon after sentence of death had been pronounced on Fries, Thomas Adams, son of the President, told him, that "his father wished to know the points and authorities which Mr. Dallas and he had intended to rely on, in favour of Fries, if they had defended him on the trial. The Attorney General of the United States, Charles Lee, made the like request to Mr. Lewis and Mr. Dallas. These gentlemen made their statement accordingly,

\* This brief sketch I have abstracted from the deposition of William Rawle, Esq. (who as district attorney conducted the prosecution) taken to be used in the trial of Judge Chase, on his impeachment. Mr. Rawle remarks, that the trial was conducted with the utmost fairness, and that the conduct of the court was marked with great tenderness and humanity towards the prisoner.

and sent it to Mr. Lee; who, on the 19th of May, acknowledged the receipt of it, and informed them that he had immediately laid the same before the President, who had directed him to return to them his thanks for the trouble they had so obligingly taken." It would not have been difficult to anticipate the consequence of consulting, in this case, *only the counsel of the convict*: Fries was pardoned. It was a popular act, in Pennsylvania. My removal from office was on the 12th of the same month of May, as I have already stated, *with its motives*. I content myself with just remarking, that Mr. Adams sought not any information in this case from the persons best qualified to give it *impartially*—the *Judges of the Court*; especially when the presiding Judge was Samuel Chase, his old Congressional friend, of whom he gives this honourable character: "I have long wished for a fair opportunity of transmitting to posterity my humble testimony to the virtues and talents of that able and upright magistrate and statesman."\* Nor would it have been amiss to have applied to William Rawle, District Attorney of Pennsylvania, who had conducted both the trials, and from whose fair mind might have been expected information quite as correct as that which could be derived from the counsel of the convict. But if to *pardon* was the object, it was expedient to consult *his counsel only*. Mr. Dallas, in his deposition (also taken in the case of the impeachment of Judge Chase) avowed the leading motive with him and Mr. Lewis, in eventually refusing to act as counsel for Fries. He says, "I may be permitted, likewise, to discharge a duty to the counsel, as well as to all the parties interested, in observing, that Mr. Lewis and myself were greatly influenced, in the conduct which we pursued, by our opinion of the means most likely to save the life of Fries, under all the circumstances of the case." Judge Chase says, they refused to appear for Fries, "because they knew the law and the fact to be against them, and the case to be desperate;

\* Letter II, dated April 1809, published in the Boston Patriot.



“and supposed that their withdrawing themselves [under the circumstances above intimated] in the event of a conviction, which from their knowledge of the law and the facts they knew to be almost certain,\* might aid the prisoner in an application to the President for a pardon.”†

General Hamilton (in the letter of 1800, on the conduct and character of Mr. Adams) noticing this case of Fries, and the extraordinary step of consulting only the culprit's counsel, makes this reflection on the pardon: “We are driven to seek a solution for it in some system of concession to his political enemies; a system the most fatal for himself, and for the cause of public order, of any that he could possibly devise. It is by temporisings like these, that men at the head of affairs lose the respect both of friends and foes: it is by temporisings like these, that in times of fermentation and commotion, governments are prostrated, which might easily have been upheld by an erect and imposing attitude.”

The reflections of Mr. Adams are of quite a different complexion. In his tenth letter in the Boston Patriot (May 17, 1809) remarking on his responsibility for all his executive acts, and therefore that it was his right and duty to be governed by his own mature and unbiassed judgment, though unfortunately it may be in direct contradiction to the advice of all his ministers, he says, “This was my situation in more than one instance. It had been so in the nomination of Mr. Gerry; it was afterwards so in the pardon of Fries: *two measures that I recollect with infinite satisfaction, and which will console me in my last hour.*”

How much cause for satisfaction and consolation he can find in the case of Mr. Gerry, the reader will be able to judge, from the proceedings exhibited in this Review, of that gentleman as Mr. Adams's minister to the French Republic. As to Fries, he having been at

\* Lewis and Dallas were Fries' counsel on his first trial, and therefore perfectly acquainted with the merits of the case.

† Judge Chase's Defence before the Senate.

the head of a second insurrection in Pennsylvania, to prevent, by force, the execution of the laws enacted by Congress for levying taxes laid in pursuance of the express provisions of the Constitution, and, in 1793, of the most pressing necessity, for the common defence of the country, and the protection of its great and essential commercial interests, against the hostilities of the French Republic; under these circumstances, the public welfare appeared to demand a signal example of inflexible justice.

We see, however, that in various acts of President Adams, combined with their apparent motives, he can glory, and draw consolation, where other men would find cause only for profound regret.

Those, who have been accustomed to view Mr. Adams as a bold and able leader in the American Revolution; as a man of extensive learning, and much and useful experience; as a great and upright statesman; and therefore entitled to all the high offices and honours which his fellow citizens could bestow, and did confer upon him; will be astonished at the picture of his character presented in this Review, and not without difficulty admit that it is a likeness. My veracity is pledged for all I state as facts. What I give on information from others, I offer because I think it entitled to belief. Of the correctness of my inferences and conjectures from any facts and circumstances which I state, every reader will judge. If, after all, any should remain incredulous, Mr. Adams himself may at least contribute to remove their unbelief. In the 26th letter, vol. I, p. 129, London edition, of his "Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America," the doubting reader may find a solution of the apparent enigma. There Mr. Adams says, "The passions are all unlimited; nature has left them so: if they could be bounded, they would be extinct; and there is no doubt they are of indispensable importance in the present system. They certainly increase too, by exercise, like the body. *The love of gold grows faster than the heap of acquisition. The*

“*love of praise* increases by every gratification ; till it stings like an adder, and bites like a serpent ; *till the man is miserable every moment when he does not snuff the incense.* AMBITION strengthens at every advance, and at last takes possession of the whole soul so absolutely, that the man sees nothing in the world of importance to others, or himself, but in this object. The subtlety of these three passions, which have been selected from all the others because they are aristocratical passions, in subduing all others, and even the *understanding* itself, if not the CONSCIENCE too, until they become absolute and imperious masters of the whole mind, is a curious speculation.” He then mentions the cunning with which they hide themselves from others, and from the man himself too ; the patience with which they wait for opportunities ; the torments they voluntarily suffer for a time, to secure a full enjoyment at length.”

On this recital, who can forbear to exclaim, “Ecce Homo !” or, in the solemn words of Nathan to David, “Thou art the man !”

Mr. Adams would spurn at an exhortation from me ; but he may not refuse to apply to himself his own admonition. “Men should endeavour at a *balance* of affections and appetites, under the monarchy of REASON and CONSCIENCE within, as well as at a balance of power without. If they surrender the guidance, for any course of time, to any one passion, they may depend upon finding it, in the end, an usurping, domineering, cruel tyrant.”\*

At the age of eighty eight years, it might be expected that a man’s strong passions would have cooled ; but those of Mr. Adams, by an immoderate indulgence, have acquired the mastery of his soul ; and now, incapable of personally enjoying their gratification, he lives in his son ; and, if he survive a few more months, he will be pleased or tormented, as that son shall succeed or fail, in the last object to which American ambition can aspire.

\* Same volume, p. 130.

In the account here given of the *intrigue* in which *the precipitate institution of the mission to France originated*, compared with Mr. Adams's *too often* repeated avowals of *public motives exclusively*, every reader will have the means of forming his opinion, whether *these*, or *others purely selfish*, the offspring of his ungoverned ruling passions, were the decisive inducements. But although he readily adopted the measure, it may easily be imagined that it was the contrivance of a more cool and crafty head—of the man of whom that experienced diplomatist, Mr. Liston, once said, that, “for conducting “an intrigue, there was not one American who came “within a thousand miles of him.”\* This crafty person perfectly understood the character of Mr. Adams, and knew the avenues to his heart. Mr. Liston said, at the same time, “that never, at any government where “he had been a minister, had he so little trouble in gaining all desirable information: that from Mr. Adams “himself he obtained what he wanted; for that nothing more was requisite than to listen, while he took “his own course in talking.” This brings to my mind an anecdote, of late accidentally communicated to me. Mr. Adams paid a handsome compliment to Washington, and said, “*He could keep his mouth shut—I never could.*” And this again reminds me of a letter written to me some years ago by a gentleman of respectable character, of which the following is an extract:

“Some time in the fall of 1807 I was in company “with General Henry Lee, at ——— in Virginia. During the day, various topics of conversation were introduced. Among others, some remarks were made “upon the unhappy consequences which had resulted “from the change in the Federal Administration of the “Government of the United States. And this change “was in a great measure, by the person submitting “these remarks, attributed to the apathy and inertness “of Federalists at elections. General Lee replied, that

\* I received this anecdote from an unquestionably correct source, a very intelligent American gentleman present in the company when the remark was made.



“ he did not hesitate to allow some influence to that  
 “ cause ; but that he ascribed the principal cause to  
 “ Mr. Adams himself ; and then remarked, ‘ That being  
 “ in Philadelphia in the summer of 1800, when the sub-  
 “ ject of the approaching presidential election had ex-  
 “ cited much interest, he dined with Mr. Adams, in com-  
 “ pany with Mr. Jefferson. In the afternoon, when Mr.  
 “ Jefferson had retired, he took the liberty to caution  
 “ Mr. Adams, who had been, as he considered, very un-  
 “ guarded in the presence of Mr. Jefferson ; and ob-  
 “ served, with the view to enforce that caution, that he  
 “ knew Mr. Jefferson was using all his influence and  
 “ intrigue to supersede him in the presidential chair.  
 “ Mr. Adams received this friendly admonition with ap-  
 “ parent displeasure ; and observed, with warmth, that  
 “ he belieyed Mr. Jefferson to be more friendly towards  
 “ him, than many who professed to be his friends ; and  
 “ that he further believed, Mr. Jefferson never had the  
 “ ambition or desire to aspire to any higher distinction  
 “ than to be his First Lieutenant.”

So respectable is the source of this information, that it requires no confirmation. It has, besides, the advantage of *internal evidence* of its correctness, in the perfectly characteristic answer of Mr. Adams, which concludes the extract. This, probably, was the time when Mr. Jefferson was making his warmest professions of friendship to Mr. Adams, of which the latter afterwards found he had been the dupe ; and the discovery of which authorized him to reproach Mr. Jefferson with “ a want of sincerity.” Three years before, Mr. Jefferson had proclaimed his *humble* pretensions, in his inaugural address to the Senate, when he took the chair in that assembly ; he having been elected Vice-President, as Mr. Adams was elected President, of the United States. Mr. Jefferson appeared to rejoice that the burthen of the chief executive power had fallen on Mr. Adams’s shoulders, so much abler than his own to sustain its weight ! Remarking to the Senate, that the primary business of the office of Vice-President being to preside over the forms of that house, he added, “ No one more

“sincerely prays that no accident may call me to the higher and more important functions which the constitution devolves on this office.” This profession was unnecessary—but not without an object. To the uninformed (in all communities the numerous class) as to the true characters of public men, it bore the appearance of the amiable virtue of humility; and Mr. Jefferson believed in its auspicious tendency to advance his interest on the next occasion; not doubting, in reference either to philosophy or the gospel, the correctness of the position, “He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Among those in public life, or the citizens well acquainted with distinguished public characters, there was one, and I presume but one, in the United States, who supposed Mr. Jefferson’s declaration to have come from the heart: I hardly need say, that this one was Mr. Adams.

Mr. Adams catches at every straw, and sometimes at phantoms, which, in the use he makes of them, may have even a remote tendency to give a colour of necessity for instituting his extraordinary mission to the French Republic in 1799. For this end, he allows himself to go back to the year 1793, to exhibit the temper of the people in relation to France and Great-Britain; and tells the following tale: “Jonathan Dickinson Sargeant and Dr. Hutchinson, two old revolutionary Americans, extremely popular, put themselves at the head of the mob. Washington’s house was surrounded by an innumerable multitude, from day to day, huzzaing, demanding war against England, cursing Washington, and crying success to the French patriots and virtuous republicans.”——“J. Q. Adams first turned this tide; and the yellow fever completed the salvation of Washington. Sargeant and Hutchinson died of it. I was assured, soon after, by some of the most sensible, substantial and intelligent Quakers, that nothing but the yellow fever saved Washington from being dragged out of his house, or being compelled to declare war against England.”\*

\* Letter to Cunningham, No. XII, Oct. 15. 1808.

This story was too absurd and ridiculous to be believed. When writing it, Mr. Adams forget that the President of the United States did not possess the power to declare war; and that no leader of a mob in Philadelphia could be so ignorant as not to know that Congress alone possessed that power. I do not know whether Dr. Hutchinson left any offspring; but the respectable sons of Mr. Sargeant will not thank Mr. Adams for placing their father, an eminent lawyer, and the Attorney General of Pennsylvania, at the head of a *mob*, and of a mob to commit such an outrage on the President of the United States—and that President, Washington. Incredible, however, as was this story—of which I had never heard before—I wrote to William Rawle, Esq. at that time the District Attorney of the United States for Pennsylvania; and, referring him to Mr. Adams's statement, requested an answer. In his letter, dated the 18th of last December, he thus writes: "In respect to the mob asserted to have surrounded the President's house, &c. &c. Judge Peters and I have already had several conversations. We read this part of the Cunningham Correspondence with surprise, as we neither of us at the time knew, nor till then had heard, of such transactions. The Judge lived out of town, but was frequently in town. I resided about three of our squares distant from the President, passed his door almost every day, and regularly attended his weekly levees. I never noticed the slightest disturbance of the kind. Mr. Sargeant and Dr. Hutchinson, although zealous in their politics, were not men who would have so degraded themselves."

Where, let me now ask, could this mob story have its origin? It is a sheer fabrication. But who was its artificer? Mr. Adams is responsible for it. And it further shows the justness of the remark I have had occasion to make and to repeat, that where his passions or interested views are enlisted, no reliance can be placed on his statements.

Hamilton acknowledged, and every other well-informed man will acknowledge, that Mr. Adams, in 1798,



contributed largely to rouse the spirit of the nation to resistance against the unexampled insults and injuries we had experienced from the French Republic; and he boasts of the beneficial operation of the measures then taken, and of our naval successes in the limited war authorized by Congress; when, as he says, \* “the proud pavilion of France was, in many glaring instances, humiliated under the eagles and stripes of the United States.” But the greatest triumph of all, he says, was in the humiliation of the haughty Directory; who, renouncing all their unfounded claims, sought for peace—“transmitting to him the most positive assurances, in several various ways, both official and unofficial, that they would receive his ministers, *and make peace on his own terms.*” These last words are, assuredly, a fond assumption of Mr. Adams. The Directory could never have entertained the idea of giving Mr. Adams a *carte blanche*, on which to write what articles he pleased. It is too absurd to be imagined, except by Mr. Adams when his mind was highly sublimated. Had such an offer been made, it would have furnished additional ground for believing the Directory were not sincere. But, unfortunately, in the heyday of victory, when the United States were rising in their own estimation, and were cheered by the salutations of admiring Europe, the American Admiral struck his flag; the “Proud Pavilion of France” rose above the “Eagles and the Stripes;” and, instead of “making peace on his own terms,” he received the law from France. He even gave up the trophies of our victories; stipulating to restore to France her national vessels captured by ours. He *purchased* peace at the expense of twenty millions of dollars (for that was the estimated amount of French spoliations) relinquished to France, without any equivalent. For the United States had been fairly exonerated of the burthen of their treaties with France, by her “infractions, violence, injustice, and breach of faith;”† and Congress

\* Letter No. XXX, Feb. 22, 1809, to Cunningham.

† The words, marked with inverted commas, are Mr. Adams’s, in letter XXX, to Cunningham.



accordingly declared them null and void. But the French government would not consent to give any indemnities to the American merchants, for those spoliations of their property, unless the United States would revive and restore the treaty of alliance, with its burdensome guarantee. To get rid of this, the claims of the merchants were abandoned.

Such were the fruits of the *glorious* naval war of 1793, and of the *inglorious* peace by which it was terminated. Yet, Mr. Adams fondly expects, that for these acts in his administration, laurels will crown his monument, and flourish in immortal green. "If ever," says he, "If ever an historian should arise, fit for the investigation, this transaction must be transmitted to posterity as the most glorious period of American history, as the most disinterested, prudent and successful conduct in my whole life. For I was obliged to give peace and unexampled prosperity to my country for eight years—and if it is not for a longer duration, it is not my fault—against the advice, entreaties and intrigues of all my ministers, and all the leading Federalists in both houses of Congress."

This rodomontade of Mr. Adams is perfectly in character. It is akin to another fond conceit of his, which we find in his 28th letter (July 27, 1809) published in the Boston Patriot—the last paragraph: "I shall continue," says he, "to send you extracts of letters, by which the rise, progress and conclusion of our connexion with Holland may be in some degree understood; *a connexion that accelerated the peace, more than the capture of Cornwallis and his army.*" Who can forbear to smile at the folly as well as the vanity of this assumption? Cornwallis surrendered on the 18th of October, 1781. On the 27th of February, 1782, a resolution was carried, in the House of Commons, against the whole force of the administration, declaring it to be inexpedient any longer to prosecute offensive war against America. And, to put an end to all further hesitation on the part of the crown, the House of Commons, on the fourth of March, resolved.

“that the house will consider as enemies to his majesty and the country, all those who should advise or attempt a further prosecution of offensive war on the continent of America.” These votes were soon followed by a change of administration, and by instructions to the commanding officers of his Britannic majesty’s forces in America, which conformed to them.\*

In the summer following, a British minister was sent to Paris to negotiate a treaty of peace with the Commissioners of the United States. The important preliminary step had been insisted on and obtained by Mr. Jay—that *the United States were to be treated with as already independent*. He gave notice of this to Mr. Adams, who was in Holland, and who arrived in Paris some time after the middle of October. On the 30th of November, 1782, Dr. Franklin, Mr. Adams and Mr. Jay signed the preliminary treaty of peace with Great-Britain, which constituted, in fact, the definitive treaty.

Now the connexion (by which I presume Mr. Adams means the treaty) with Holland, negotiated by him, was not concluded until the 8th of October, 1782; almost a year after the capture of Cornwallis, and when the Dutch government knew the negotiations for peace between the United States and Great-Britain had been for some time going on at Paris. Hence it is past all doubt, that the resolutions of the House of Commons, the consequent change in the British ministry, and the negotiations begun at Paris, decisively influenced their High Mightinesses to conclude the commercial treaty with Mr. Adams. This inference appears inevitable, if we take a view of the deplorable state of Holland, after England had made war upon her, and cut up her commerce by extensive captures. I will take Mr. Adams’s own description, in one of his letters to Congress—the epitome of similar information spread over other letters. In that of the 4th of August, 1781, he says, “I should scarcely be credited, if I were to describe the present state of this country. There is

\* Marshall’s Life of Washington, vol. IV, p. 567.

“more animosity against one another, than against the common enemy. They can agree upon nothing; neither upon war nor peace; neither upon acknowledging the independence of America nor upon denying it.” Again, in the same letter, he says, “In short, this nation has no confidence left in its own wisdom, courage, virtue or power. It has no esteem, nor passion, nor desire, for either. It loves and seeks wealth, and that alone.”\*

One word more on Mr. Adams’s mission of February 1799, to make peace with the French Republic.

This mission was instituted in the midst of our naval successes, and of the increasing spirit of the people. But for this, the system of administration which had been established under Washington, and until then continued under Adams, would have remained. The true character of the French government had been developed, and generally understood—and consequently was generally detested. Our proper weapon of war, our navy, would have been strengthened by an adequate increase; our commerce would have revived and flourished. On the change of the French revolutionary government, by which its powers were placed in the hands of Bonaparte, the spirit, vigour and ability which the United States had displayed, and would have continued to display, would have secured to them the respect of that extraordinary man, and saved *them* from renewed insults, and their *commerce* from the more extended and aggravated depredations under the Imperial Ruler, than had been experienced from the despotic Directory. The United States would not have been told by Bonaparte’s minister, that those who administered their government were “men without just political views, without honour, without energy”—an *insult unexampled*, and, what is worse, an *INSULT UNRESENTED*.† Had that first system of the federal government continued to operate, we should have had no indefinite embargo, prostrating our commerce, in

\* Letter LXIII, dated Feb. 8, 1810, in the Boston Patriot.

† Letter of Feb. 14, 1810, from the French minister, the duke de Cadore, to General Armstrong. Madison was then President.



subserviency to France ; nor its sequel, the non-intercourse laws, in their effects and consequences alike destructive ; nor, finally, a three years' war with Great-Britain ; a war which cost the United States more than a hundred millions of dollars, and the lives of probably thirty thousand of our citizens, *without obtaining any one of the objects for which it was professed to be declared.*

Dr. Johnson has observed, that "there is nothing more dreadful to an author than neglect ; compared with which, reproach, hatred, and opposition, are names of happiness." Mr. Adams felt himself to be in this unfortunate situation. He began to publish his long letters in the Boston Patriot on the 10th of April 1809 ; and in two months he had advanced to his eighteenth letter—the subject, his unadvised mission to France. But it seems no notice was taken of them, by friend or foe. "A most profound silence," says he, "is observed relative to my scribbles. I say not a word about them to any one ; and nobody says a word to me. The newspapers are still as midnight." But, unwilling to think this silence resulted from general indifference to his letters (though doubtless that was the fact) he fancied that "sulphureous combustibles were preparing under ground, and the electrical fire collecting in the clouds," to burst upon him all at once, to destroy him : but, consoling himself with the expectation that he might escape unhurt from the thunder and lightning, and the eruption of the volcano, he determines that "his pen shall go as long as his fingers can hold it."\* Some of his well-wishers, perceiving that in his own bosom the lightning and the fiery lava were preparing, may regret that they ever found vent, satisfied that in the end the explosion and eruption will not injure those he meant to destroy, and that the *great sufferer* will be *himself*. They may see verified his own assertion, that "records themselves" [his letters were designed for records] "are often liars ;" and his prediction fulfilled, that "he should not be believed." The statements and evidences, which I have

\* Letter XXXVIII, June 7, 1809, to Cunningham.



exhibited, must convince every impartial reader, that *his records are not entitled to belief.*

Mr. Adams often complains that the federalists are his enemies; sometimes limiting the charge to their leaders. If this were true, what was the cause? The federalists wished to retain their ascendancy, for their own sake and their country's; and every body of men, every association, will have a leader or leaders. Mr. Adams was once their chief. And what produced an alienation? *Their* principles and system of government remained unchanged. To the conduct of their chief, then, must their alienation be ascribed. And how was it possible for men of intelligent and independent minds to persevere in their confidence, and continue their attachment, where they saw, constantly displayed, boundless vanity, disgusting egotism, repulsive self-sufficiency, and an ambition so inordinate as to be capable of sacrificing principles, system and consistency, to personal gratification?

Was Mr. Jay ever reproached by any *federalist*, that deserved the name? With eminent abilities, with as pure integrity, and true zeal to serve his country, as any citizen ever displayed, he was driven from power by the *enemies* of *federalism*. But the profound respect, which his public conduct had produced, has suffered no diminution. Still revered, admired and loved, his name, without a stain to lessen its lustre, will descend to posterity with distinguished brightness.

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## SECTION IV.

### ELBRIDGE GERRY.

THIS gentleman makes so prominent a figure in Mr. Adams's letters, in relation both to himself and to me, I must unavoidably consume a good deal of ink and paper in exhibiting his conduct and character. I re-

gret the necessity of entering on details, which I fear may fatigue the reader, but without which the force of Mr. Adams's calumnies and of my vindication cannot be fully understood. This biographical sketch of Mr. Gerry, though in some respects minute, may nevertheless be found in a degree interesting, when it shall be recollected, that, subsequently to the actions and events detailed, he was twice elected by the people of Massachusetts to be Governor of that State, and afterwards by the people of the United States to be their Vice-President.

Mr. Gerry, appointed a delegate to Congress from Massachusetts, in 1776, had the good fortune to be present at the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, and the honour of subscribing his name to that celebrated state paper. He continued a member of that body for some years. He was also a member of the National Convention by which the present Constitution of the United States was formed (and carped at some of its provisions) and a member of the House of Representatives in the first Congress, and in one or two of the succeeding Congresses.

The financial embarrassments of the French Monarchy produced, about the year 1787, a crisis, which, in a succession of remedial measures and reforms, issued in the subversion of the Monarchy, and the establishment of a Republic. The people of the United States, flourishing and happy in their own republican institutions, rejoiced in the prospect of a free government to be established in France. This joy was raised to enthusiasm, by the recollection of the aids received from that country in effecting their own independence. A war between France and her neighbours soon succeeded. The energies of her government, and the zeal of the people, brought powerful armies into the field; which enabled her to defeat her enemies, and to invade their territories. In a few years, the neighbouring nations were subdued. Her pride increased with her conquests; and her injustice was not slow to follow in their train. "I considered (says the wise man) all the

“oppressions that are done under the sun—and on the *“side of the oppressors there was POWER.”* A series of unprincipled rulers governed the state, and in succession cut off the heads of their predecessors. At length a constitution was formed, and a government organized, on republican principles, which gave hopes, to the lovers of liberty, of a permanent establishment. The legislature was composed of two branches, denominated the Council of Ancients, and the Council of Five Hundred; and the executive consisted of five persons, called the Directory. But the revolutionary spirit continued. The executive power found the means of impairing the independence of the legislature; and, practising much tyranny at home, set no limits to its exercise on all the nations within its reach. Remote as were the United States, their commerce brought them near to every portion of the world. Upon various pretences, all alike unfounded, the corsairs of France were let loose upon that commerce, and her government insulted our country.

Willing to hope that these outrages and injuries originated in misrepresentations and misconceptions of the conduct and views of the United States in relation to France, President Washington appointed General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney minister plenipotentiary to the French Republic, to make to its government those frank and friendly explanations, which, if received in the spirit with which they were to be offered, would restore harmony and a beneficial intercourse between the two countries. General Pinckney, accepting the appointment, proceeded on his mission, and early in December, 1796, arrived at Paris. He was introduced to the minister for foreign affairs, Mr. de la Croix, by Mr. Monroe, as his successor in the station of minister plenipotentiary from the United States; and in that character delivered an official copy of his letters of credence, which announced his public character, under the signature of the President and the great seal of the United States. General Pinckney's public character being thus ascertained, all the indignities practised to-



wards him by the French government were insults as well to the country which he represented, as to himself. Anxious, however, to restore that harmony which once existed between America and France, Pinckney forbore to resent this treatment, hoping that a reconciliation might yet be effected. But he was disappointed, and was required to leave France. Upon this requisition he quitted Paris, and travelled with his family to Amsterdam, there to await the orders of his government. General Pinckney might bear those indignities with the more patience, because they were not peculiar to him. In one of his letters to the Department of State, he says, "I am informed that they have already sent off thirteen foreign ministers; and a late emigrant,\* now here, has assured them, that America is not of greater consequence to them, nor ought to be treated with greater respect, than Geneva or Genoa." Those who regard us as being of some consequence (continues General Pinckney) seem to have taken up an idea, that our government acts upon principles opposed to the real sentiments of a large majority of our people; and they are willing to temporise until the event of the election of President is known; thinking, if one public character [Adams] is chosen, he will be attached to the interest of Great-Britain; and that if another character [Jefferson] is elected, he will be (to use the expression of Du Pont de Nemours in the Council of Ancients) devoted to the interest of France." Every body knows that Adams and Jefferson were the rival candidates for the presidency, on the retirement of Washington.

Notwithstanding this haughty and insolent rejection of General Pinckney, it was thought expedient to make one more effort to recover the good will of our terma-

\* Meaning Mr. Talleyrand, I presume, who visited this country in the year 1794; appeared in the character of an emigrant, and was treated with hospitality and respect. If his object in coming to the United States was to escape the guillotine, yet, from what is mentioned by General Pinckney, we may infer that he acted the part of a spy; and probably in that character made his peace with the Directory, who in 1797 appointed him their minister for foreign affairs. For his great talents and *other qualities*, no man was better adapted to their service.



gant sister. A more solemn embassy was therefore instituted; and General Pinckney, General Marshall, and Francis Dana, then chief justice of Massachusetts, were appointed by President Adams, with the advice and consent of the Senate, "Envoys Extraordinary and Ministers Plenipotentiary of the United States to the French Republic." Elbridge Gerry was Mr. Adams's choice; and it was with some difficulty that the heads of departments prevailed on him to substitute Mr. Dana; the same gentleman of whom Mr. Adams made mention, alike honourable and just, in his letters published in the Boston Patriot, in 1809-10. But Mr. Dana declining the service, Mr. Adams recurred to the first object of his partiality, Mr. Gerry. Further opposition was vain. One reason assigned by Mr. Adams for preferring Mr. Gerry was (and I wish it to be remembered) that, besides possessing the requisite talents, *he was a firm man, and superior to all the arts of French seduction!*

Marshall and Gerry arrived in France about the last of September 1797, and proceeded to Paris, where General Pinckney joined them. They in due form announced their arrival to Mr. Talleyrand, the French Minister for foreign affairs. Cards of hospitality were sent them, to save them from molestation by the police; and they expected to be formally received, and to enter on the business of their mission. But in a few days they had reason to think that the first favourable appearances were delusive. They delivered to Mr. Talleyrand copies of their letters of credence from the President, showing their characters, and desiring full credit to be given to their communications. But they were not admitted to an audience of the Directory. At length, certain propositions were made to them by Mr. Talleyrand's agents to which they must assent, as preliminaries to their admission as ministers of the United States. These preliminaries were, a disavowal of some parts of the President's speech to Congress, touching the conduct of the French government, notoriously founded on facts, and therefore impossible to be disa-

vowed; but at which the Directory *affected* to be offended. Nevertheless, they were not inexorable. Their extreme resentments might be allayed, and their WOUNDED HONOUR healed, by a *douceur* (gratuity or bribe) of fifty thousand pounds sterling (222,000 dollars) for the pockets of the Directory and their minister Talleyrand; and a loan to the amount of thirty two millions of florins, equal to twelve millions eight hundred thousand dollars; for which Dutch paper securities, under the name of Rescriptions, of that nominal sum, but acknowledged to be worth not more than ten shillings in the pound, might be assigned to the United States. These *modest* propositions were of course not assented to. Our envoys had no power to give their assent. Their instructions expressly forbade the making of any loan: it would have violated our duty as a neutral nation. But if the *douceur* had been given, and our envoys had been so far disposed to assent to a loan as to consult their government upon it (an operation of full six months) which indeed they offered to do; the horrible depredations on our commerce were not to be discontinued; and these were already estimated at fifteen millions of dollars, and were still going on with unremitting activity.

The names of Talleyrand's private agents, designated by the letters X and Y, were written at length in our envoys' despatches; but accompanied with an engagement, on the part of the United States, *that their names should in no event be made public*. For this reason, when the despatches were to be laid before Congress, I substituted the letters X and Y. The letters W and Z were also introduced by me, gratuitously, instead of the proper names of two other persons who had some agency in these transactions, and through whom X and Y might perhaps be discovered.

Mr. Talleyrand's corrupt overtures were repeated, and pressed upon the envoys; and soon with threats of vengeance from the Directory, if not complied with. Thanks to the intelligence and firmness of Pinckney

and Marshall, these threats were utterly disregarded. I do not add the name of Mr. Gerry, although he then concurred with them, for reasons which will hereafter appear.

Thus slighted, thus insulted, and kept at an official distance, Pinckney and Marshall would not make to Talleyrand, what he desired, *inofficial* visits to discuss *official* business.\* Mr. Gerry, however, because he had seen Talleyrand in the United States, in the form of an emigrant, was pleased, *contrary to the opinions of both of his colleagues*, to make him an early visit. Once he was accompanied by Mr. Y and Mr. Z. The latter was a French gentleman, occasionally if not regularly employed by Talleyrand; and, understanding the English language, served as an interpreter. Mr. Gerry, thus in the presence of Y and Z, spoke to Mr. Talleyrand of the propositions which had been made to our envoys by Y, in behalf of Mr. Talleyrand: to which statement the latter answered—"The information Mr. Y had given was just, and might always be "relied on."

Although not received, yet the depredations on our commerce, the capture and condemnation of our vessels, were so extensive, and pressed with ardour, that Pinckney and Marshall proposed the making of a respectful communication to the minister, to pray for a suspension of those proceedings until the further order of the Directory. "Mr. Gerry is of a contrary opinion: "he apprehends that by hurrying we shall irritate the "government."† It was now the 15th of October. To several subsequent attempts to act with some decision, Mr. Gerry was constantly opposed. War, like a terrible spectre, had risen up to his view. Precipitation, he said, would certainly produce war. Yet he acknowledged the demands of France to be unjust, and her treatment of the envoys insulting; and to such a degree, that, if proceeding from any other government

\* At a subsequent period, events of magnitude, affecting the United States, induced them to depart from this determination.

† General Marshall's manuscript journal, a copy of which is now before me.



in the world, he said he would not submit to them for ten days.

Near a month having elapsed, since the envoys had delivered to the French minister copies of their letters of credence, without their being admitted to an audience of the Directory, Pinckney and Marshall wished to call the attention of the minister to the subject of their mission. To this Mr. Gerry at length agreed; but the next day changed his mind, and proposed the postponement of such a letter until all their conversations already detailed should be put in cipher (a tedious operation) and six copies made out and sent to their government. "This (says General Marshall in his "journal) would, on a reasonable calculation, require "about two or three months." However, a letter having been prepared, and submitted to Mr. Gerry, and he having employed a day in making essential changes, to adapt it to his own taste—to which the other two envoys yielded, for the sake of unanimity—on the 11th of November it was sent to Mr. Talleyrand. No answer, however, was given to it.

Three months having elapsed, General Marshall draughted a long letter, consisting of a justification of the conduct of our government in relation to France. This was done by the 10th of January 1798. It was submitted to Mr. Gerry (whose humour it was necessary to consult to obtain his signature) to suggest any alterations and amendments he might think proper. That such a letter should be written, had been agreed on by the 18th of December; and that it should be concluded with a request to the French government to open the negotiation, or to grant to the envoys their passports, to return home. The letter was closed, however, in very gentle terms (undoubtedly to satisfy Mr. Gerry) requesting, that if no hope remained of restoring harmony between the two republics, by amicable negotiation, "their return to their own country "might be facilitated." Mr. Gerry's vexatious delays prevented the completion and translation of the letter until the 31st of January, when it was signed, and sent to the French minister.



Mr. Gerry appears now to have had frequent appointments to meet Mr. Talleyrand; but this gentleman was often absent, nor did he think Mr. Gerry of consequence enough to make any apology for repeated disappointments, until a fourth had occurred. Then one of Talleyrand's secretaries called on Mr. Gerry, to make a slight apology; and this secretary took this opportunity (Feb. 3) to remark, that they had received a very long letter from the envoys, and inquired what was its purport—"for they could not take the trouble to read it"! and he added, "that such long letters were not to the taste of the French government, who liked a short address, coming at once to the point." No; the peremptory demands of that government, just or unjust, on the neighbouring nations, subjugated or intimidated by the French arms, superseded all negotiation; and the like short work was intended to be made with the United States. The secretary invited Mr. Gerry to see Mr. Talleyrand the next day.

"February 4.—Mr. Gerry returned from his visit to Mr. Talleyrand, and informed me (says General Marshall) that communications and propositions had been made to him by that gentleman, which he was not at liberty to impart to General Pinckney or myself; that he had also propounded some questions to the minister, which had produced some change in the proposition from its original aspect; that he was to give an answer to-morrow or the day after; and that upon it probably depended peace or war."\*

So this distinguished diplomatist, Mr. Gerry, the favourite of Mr. Adams, "whose negotiations were more useful and successful than those of either of his colleagues"†—"by way of excellence (says Mr. Adams) *my own* ambassador, for I had appointed him against

\* General Marshall's manuscript journal. The above paragraph I have copied verbatim. For all other details concerning the envoys and their proceedings, in Paris, which are not communicated in their public despatches, I am indebted to General Marshall's journal, of which, on his return from France, he allowed me to take a copy. The original is in his hands.

† So says Mr. Adams in letter XIV, Nov. 7, 1808, to Cunningham.

"the advice of all my ministers."\*—This envoy, one of three, and the last of the three, to whom the great interests of the United States in relation to France had been entrusted, engages in private consultations with the French minister, and under an injunction of secrecy, to which he pledges himself, on the business of their important mission! And on his answer to that minister, he says, "probably depended peace or war"! And the whole of this machination was to be concealed from his colleagues! So gross a misdemeanor must be ascribed either to corruption, or to weakness and pusillanimity and vanity: I am ready to acquit him of the first.

On the 18th of January, at the instance of the Directory, the two Legislative Councils passed a decree, enacting that "every vessel found at sea, loaded in whole or in part with merchandise the production of England or of her possessions, shall be declared good prize, whoever the owner of these goods or merchandise may be."† On the 6th of February, General Marshall put into Mr. Gerry's hands the draught of a letter to the French minister, remonstrating against that decree, and closing with a request of passports. But Mr. Gerry was too busily occupied with his secret negotiations with that minister to attend to the letter, though it would affect nearly every American vessel on the ocean. On the 14th of February Mr. Gerry returned the draught of the letter, with some amendments. It was then put under copy, and translated.‡ On the 18th, being fully prepared, it was offered to Mr. Gerry to sign—which he declined.

The envoys had been waiting for an answer to their long letter, dated the 17th and delivered to the minister on the 31st of January; in which, as before mentioned, they had minutely examined all the subjects on which the French government had made complaints,

\* Letter XXXIV, March 20, 1809, to Cunningham.

† This is the prototype of Bonaparte's Berlin decree.

‡ The Envoys' letters to Mr. Talleyrand were in their own language, but accompanied by French translations, as well to prevent misconstructions, as any pretence for delay in answering them.

and exhibited a complete vindication of their own. At length Mr. Talleyrand, on the 18th of March, deigned to send them an answer, in the usual style of French Republican sophistry and round assertions, which he knew were alike false and insulting, and near its close is the following paragraph :

“ It is, therefore, only in order to smooth the way of discussions, that the undersigned has entered into the preceding explanations. It is with the same view, that he declares to the commissioners and envoys extraordinary, that, notwithstanding the kind of prejudice which has been entertained with respect to them, the Executive Directory is disposed to treat with that one of the three, whose opinions, presumed to be more impartial, promise, in the course of the explanations, more of that reciprocal confidence which is indispensable.”

The above paragraph, being interpreted, would read thus :—“ You, Messrs. Pinckney and Marshall, discerning what the rights and interests of your country demand, and being determined to maintain them, are not the persons with whom the Directory choose to have any intercourse. Mr. Gerry, on the contrary, being more open to useful impressions, ‘ more impartial’—that is, not partial to those rights and interests, at least so far as comports with the present views and wants of the French government—possesses the qualifications proper for an envoy with whom the Directory will negotiate.”

At the beginning, Mr. Talleyrand’s agents X and Y had stated to the envoys the necessity of paying money, and a great deal of it, to sooth the irritated Directory, and of agreeing to a very large loan. The envoys repelled these demands ; and assured those agents, and Mr. Talleyrand himself, that they had no power to make any loan of money ; and, finally, that their instructions forbade their agreeing to a loan. Mr. Gerry concurred with his colleagues in these declarations. But, after he had been closeted by Talleyrand, and invited to and indulged in frequent secret conferences,



he came out a convert to the minister's avowed opinion, that a loan, to be paid *after the war* with England, was not forbidden by their instructions; although the direct object of such a stipulation was, to raise the money upon it immediately, to aid *in carrying on the existing war*! And in this new opinion, enforced by the terror of the war with which Talleyrand had inspired him, Mr. Gerry persisted, in opposition to the plain and unanswerable arguments of his colleagues. Their instruction; on this question, was in these words—"That no aid be stipulated in favour of France during the present war."

On the 3d of April, the envoys sent to the French minister a full answer to his letter of the 18th of March; and concluded with saying, that if "it should be the will of the Directory to order passports for the whole or any number of them, you will please to accompany such passports with letters of safe conduct, which will entirely protect from the cruisers of France the vessels in which they may respectively sail, and give to their persons, suite and property that perfect security to which the laws and usages of nations entitle them."

After this, General Marshall prepared for his departure, and waited only the order of the Directory as to a passport and letter of safe conduct. But these they wished to avoid giving: for though it was perfectly clear *that Mr. Gerry was their man*, they desired not to make a formal selection of him; but that Generals Pinckney and Marshall, by asking passports for themselves, would, in effect, make the selection; and by thus withdrawing, in appearance voluntarily, leave Mr. Gerry more at liberty, with some colour of authority, to negotiate alone. It is due to him to say, that he was not guilty of this last degree of folly: he undertook only to negotiate *informally*, and in this way suffered himself to be amused and trifled with for above four months; two months and a half of that time after he had received instructions from his government to leave France. He had repeatedly told his colleagues



that he would not stay ; but changed his mind afterwards, and said he would stay, *to prevent a war*. Threats of various kinds had been thrown out, for six months, to alarm the envoys, and frighten them into a submission to the arbitrary will of the Directory ; none of which had been carried into execution ; and among them this bugbear of immediate war, which Mr. Gerry had now been persuaded to believe would become a reality, and which nothing but his remaining in France would prevent.

The sickness of General Pinckney's daughter compelled him to stay some time in France. General Marshall embarked without delay ; and his safe return was a subject of cordial congratulation among his independent fellow-citizens.

The despatches from our envoys, in which the unjust and corrupt demands of the French government were displayed, having been communicated to Congress, they ordered them to be published. They were of course circulated by newspapers, and reached England ; and from England they travelled to Paris. Upon their arrival, Mr. Talleyrand, with singular effrontery, wrote to Mr. Gerry the following letter, dated May 30, 1798.

" I communicate to you, sir, a London gazette of the 15th of May. You will therein find a very strange publication. I cannot observe without surprise, that intriguers have profited of the insulated condition in which the envoys of the United States have kept themselves, to make proposals and hold conversations, the object of which was evidently to deceive you. I pray you to make known to me immediately the names denoted by the initials W, X, Y and Z, and that of the woman who is described as having had conversations with Mr. Pinckney upon the interests of America. If you are averse to sending them to me in writing, be pleased to communicate them confidentially to the bearer.

" I must rely upon your eagerness to enable the government to fathom those practices, of which I felicitate you on not having been the dupe, and which you must wish to see cleared up.

" Accept, &c. CH. MAU. TALLEYRAND."

It is difficult to conceive of a more pointed insult than was in this letter offered to Mr. Gerry. He was present with Pinckney and Marshall, and heard all the

propositions for the *douceur* and the loan, made by X and Y, in Talleyrand's behalf, and had signed all the despatches which Talleyrand now called "strange publications." Further—Mr. Gerry went with Y to Mr. Talleyrand's office (as before mentioned) where Mr. Gerry told him, "that Mr. Y had stated to him some propositions as coming from Mr. Talleyrand, respecting which Mr. Gerry could give no opinion." Mr. Gerry made some other observations: after which, Mr. Talleyrand said, "that the information Mr. Y had given him (Mr. Gerry) was just, and might always be relied on." Now, the precise propositions offered by Y, that morning, are thus given, in the envoys' despatches, as stated by Mr. Y to Mr. Gerry himself. "He (Mr. Y) then stated, that two measures, which Mr. Talleyrand proposed, being adopted, a restoration of friendship between the republics would follow immediately; the one was a gratuity of 50,000 pounds sterling; the other, a purchase of thirty-two millions of Dutch rescriptions." Still further; at a preceding interview between Mr. Talleyrand and Mr. Gerry, Mr. Z being present, Mr. Gerry said, "that as to a loan, we had no powers whatever to make one; that, if we were to attempt it, we should deceive himself and the Directory;—but that we could send one of our number for instructions on this proposition, if deemed expedient, provided the other objects of the negotiation could be discussed and adjusted;" concluding with a reference to Talleyrand's desire to "confer with the envoys individually." To this Mr. Talleyrand answered, "He should be glad to confer with the other envoys individually; *but that this matter about the money must be settled directly, without sending to America*; that he would not communicate the arret for a week; and that if we could adjust the difficulty respecting the speech, an application would nevertheless go to the United States for a loan." This conversation was on the 28th of October, twenty-four days after all the envoys had arrived in Paris. The threatened arret was to order them off.

The reader now sees, that the two conversations held by Mr. Gerry with Mr. Talleyrand demonstrate, that the money propositions of the "intriguers" are precisely those of Mr. Talleyrand himself—Mr. Y present in one instance, and Mr. Z in the other; that Talleyrand distinguished between the loan—for which the American government must be consulted, and the money—"which must be settled directly;" which was the *douceur*, or gratuity, of 50,000 pounds sterling. Yet, with all this certainty that X and Y were Talleyrand's agents, Mr. Gerry yields to his demands, and certifies their names! He wished to have evaded the disgraceful compliance; but exacted only one condition, Talleyrand's assurance that their names should not be published on his (Gerry's) authority. Talleyrand answers, "that they shall not be published as coming from him." Then follows the certificate in these words:

" *Paris, June 1798. Prairial, 6 an.*

"The names of the persons designated in the communications of the Envoys Extraordinary of the United States to their government, published in the Commercial Advertiser of the 11th of April last at New-York, are as follow:

X is Mr. ———,

Y is Mr. Bellamy,

Z is Mr. Hauteval.

E. GERRY."

"*To the Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of the French Republic.*"

This certificate is No. 12, among the documents communicated to Congress by Mr. Adams, on the 18th of January, 1799; and to this No. 12 I then subjoined the following note:

"Mr. Gerry has inserted the proper name of X in this document, as given to Mr. Talleyrand; but the person designated by X not having (like Y) avowed himself, the promise made to him and Y, 'that their names should in no event be made public,' is still obligatory on the Executive in respect to X, and therefore his name is here omitted.

T. PICKERING."

But, besides thus debasing himself in giving to Talleyrand the names of his own agents, Mr. Gerry stated, that "they did not, to his knowledge, produce credentials or documents of any kind." But what cre-

dentials could be necessary, when Mr. Talleyrand had acknowledged to Mr. Gerry himself, that Y was his agent in the propositions he had made; when not only X, but Talleyrand also, had made to Mr. Gerry the same propositions, for the gratuity and a loan? Mr. Gerry did not stop here: in another letter to Talleyrand, he says, "In regard to the citizens attached to your employment, and authorized by you to see the envoys on your official communications, I do not recollect a word from any of them which had the least relation to the proposition, made by X and Y in their informal negotiations, to pay money for corrupt purposes." Now when, on the 28th of October, Mr. Talleyrand made to Mr. Gerry the same money propositions, (as I have before stated) Z (Mr. Hauteval) was present, and was desired by Talleyrand to repeat what he had said to Mr. Gerry. Another fact was certified by Mr. Gerry—that three of the persons were foreigners, and the fourth (Hauteval) Mr. Gerry says, "acted merely as a messenger and linguist."—Mr. Talleyrand had now obtained, through Mr. Gerry's pusillanimity, the ground-work for a publication in Paris, ridiculing the envoys as the dupes of the pretended intriguers, and using Mr. Gerry's answers on the subject to justify the statement. Mr. Hauteval was not merely a messenger and linguist, but a *solicitor*, in this business, for Mr. Talleyrand; of which take the following decisive proof, it being an extract of a letter, dated June 15, 1798, from Mr. King, our minister in London, to the Secretary of State, and which was published, as a note, in my report. Col. Trumbull is the painter so well known in that profession.

"Col. Trumbull, who was at Paris soon after the arrival there of the Commissioners, has more than once informed me, that Hauteval told him, that both the *douceur* and the *loan* were indispensable; and urged him to employ his influence with the American Commissioners to offer the *bribe*, as well as the *loan*." Yet this same Mr. Hauteval, acting a part in this government farce, writes to Mr. Talleyrand—"My sen-



“sibility must be much affected on finding myself, under the letter Z, acting a part in company with certain intriguers, whose plan it doubtless was to take advantage of the good faith of the American Envoys, and make them their dupes.”—“Citizen” Talleyrand, now Prince Talleyrand, was long enough minister for foreign affairs to accumulate a princely fortune, by practising, for himself and his principals, on the vassal states subdued by, or trembling in terror of, French armies, the same exactions with those he attempted to impose on the American Envoys.—[It is perhaps hardly known, that this Prince is a citizen of Pennsylvania. He was citizenized when there in the form of a French emigrant. I have somewhere among my papers a copy of the certificate of his admission.]

On the 4th and 5th of March 1793, the first despatches from our envoys came to hand. Being voluminous, and in cipher, much time was required to decipher them, and make copies to be laid before Congress. On the 23d of that month, by the President’s direction, I wrote a letter, addressed to all the envoys; in which I quote from their No. 5, dated the 3th of January, the following passage: You “repeat, that there exists no hope of your being officially received by that government, or that the objects of your mission will be in any way accomplished.” ‘This opinion is sanctioned by the whole tenor of your communications; and we trust that soon after the date of your No. 5 you closed your mission, by demanding passports to leave the territories of the French Republic.’ Then, adverting to the fair and honourable views of the American government, which dictated the mission, and the extreme neglect with which they, and through them their country, had been treated by the government of France, my letter proceeds: “Under these circumstances, the President presumes that you have long since quitted Paris and the French dominions.” Then, noticing their intention to make one more attempt to draw the French government to an open negotiation, in which there was a bare possibility of succeeding, the President

authorized their staying to complete a treaty ; but, if there appeared a design in that government to procrastinate, they were directed to break off the negotiation, demand their passports, and return. “ For (it was added) you will consider, that *suspense* is ruinous to the essential interests of your country ;” and this instruction was given them : “ In no event is a treaty to be purchased with money, by loan or otherwise. There can be no safety in a treaty so obtained. A loan to the Republic would violate our neutrality ; and a *douceur* to the men now in power, might, by their successors, be urged as a reason for annulling the treaty ; or, as a precedent for further and repeated demands.”

In his letter of May 13th, addressed to me, Mr. Gerry acknowledged the receipt of my letter of the 23d of March, delivered to him the preceding evening by the special messenger, sent to France in a public vessel of the United States. The instructions in that letter Mr. Gerry said he should duly observe ; yet suffered himself to be amused by Talleyrand’s idle proposals of a negotiation, until near the end of July ; even when the French minister’s letters were marked with repetitions of insulting sentiments towards the American government, particularly in suggesting doubts of its sincerity in its measures to effect a settlement of differences—reproaches which Mr. Gerry knew to be unfounded—and after he had, to his colleagues, pronounced the government of the French Republic, “ the proudest as well as the most unjust government on the face of the earth ; that it was so elevated by its victories as to hold in perfect contempt all the rights of others ; and that with this disposition it would certainly make war on us, if we refused to comply with what its pride would insist on, because the measure had been proposed.”\* Thus completely had Mr. Adams’s able and magnanimous ambassador become the dupe of the French minister’s threats, mingled with blandishments flattering to his vanity. Mr. Gerry had even the folly to imagine his colleagues to be envious of his good fortune : “ They

\* General Marshall’s Journal—Feb. 26, 1793.

“were wounded (he said) and he was not surprised at it, by the manner in which they had been treated by the government of France, and the difference which had been used with respect to him.”† How differently his great friend and protector, President Adams, *at that time*, viewed his conduct, will appear by the following extracts of my letter, dated June 25, 1793, to Mr. Gerry, which, together with his voluminous documents, were by the President communicated to Congress on the 18th of January 1799.

*Extracts of the letter to Mr. Gerry, dated June 25, 1793.*

“By the instructions dated the 23d of March, which agreeably to the President’s directions I addressed to Generals Pinckney and Marshall and yourself, and of which six sets were transmitted, one by a despatch boat sent on purpose, and some of which doubtless reached you during the last month, you will have seen that it was expected that all of you would have left France long before those instructions could arrive, and which were transmitted rather from abundant caution than necessity, seeing no probability or hope existed that you would accomplish the object of your mission. The respect due to yourselves and to your country irresistibly required that you should turn your backs to a government that treated both with contempt; *a contempt not diminished but aggravated by the flattering but insidious distinction in your favour, in disparagement of men of such respectable talents, untainted honour and pure patriotism, as Generals Pinckney and Marshall, and in whom their government and country reposed entire confidence; and especially when the real object of that distinction was to enable the French government, trampling on the authority and dignity of your own, to designate an envoy with whom they would condescend to negotiate. It is therefore to be regretted, that you did not concur with your colleagues in demanding passports to quit the territories of the French Republic, some time before they left Paris.*”

“It is presumed that you will consider the instructions of the 23d of March, before mentioned, as an effectual recall. Lest, however, by any possibility, those instructions should not have reached you, and you should still be in France, *I am directed by the PRESIDENT to transmit to you this letter, and to inform you, that you are to consider it as a positive letter of recall.*”

If the reader has had patience to accompany me through this abridged history of the occurrences at Paris in relation to the French government and our envoys, and particularly to the conduct of Mr. Gerry,

† General Marshall’s Journal—April 3.

he will be prepared to understand and appreciate the passages in my report on French affairs, which Mr. Adams marked to be struck out, and which were accordingly expunged. The reader will see, in another part of this Review, General Marshall's testimony to the correctness of the report as laid before Congress. The following passages between brackets are those ordered to be struck out, and complete the report as originally written and submitted to the President. A few words of the report, as adopted by the President, are introduced, to render those passages perfectly intelligible.

Paragraph 6. Mr. Gerry wishes to evade Talleyrand's demand of the names of the persons designated by the letters W, X, Y and Z, and with reason; for he and his colleagues had "promised Messrs. X and Y" that *their* names should in no event be made public. "[I know not what considerations could warrant a departure from this promise, on the supposition that their names were unknown to the French government; and admitting that they were known (which was the fact) the minister's request was impertinent and insulting; and to comply with it was submitting to an indignity.]" In the same paragraph—"Mr. Gerry had Mr. Talleyrand's own assurance that Mr. Y was acting by his authority. [It is to be regretted that an envoy from the United States should have consented to act a part in this farce.]" In the same paragraph—Mr. Gerry, "besides formally certifying to Mr. Talleyrand the names of his *own private agents*, [giving colour for his affected ignorance of them, in using the hypothetical expression, 'if any of those persons were unauthorized to act,' and adding] that 'they did not produce, to his knowledge, credentials,' &c." In the same paragraph—"Mr. Talleyrand answered, that the information Mr. Y had given him (Mr. Gerry) was just, *and might always be relied on*. [This surely was a 'credential' for Mr. Y, to vouch not only for his past, but for any future, communica-



“ tions to the envoys, as made by the minister’s authority.”\*]

Paragraph 9. “ On the 2d of December X, Y and Z dined together at Mr. Talleyrand’s [familiarily] in company with Mr. Gerry ; and, after rising from table, the money propositions, which had before been made, were repeated, in the room and in the presence, though perhaps not in the hearing, of Mr. Talleyrand. Mr. X put the question to Mr. Gerry in direct terms, either, ‘ whether the envoys would give the *douceur*,’ or ‘ whether they had got the *money* ready,’ [meaning the *douceur*.”]

Paragraph 12. “ It was to accomplish the object of these [scandalous] intrigues, that the American envoys were kept at Paris, unreceived, six months after their credentials were laid before the Directory.”

Paragraph 13. The report, mentioning the threats which during four or five months had been uttered, of immediate orders to the envoys to quit France, and of war in its most dreadful forms—which threats had induced Mr. Gerry to separate himself from his colleagues, and stay in Paris—goes on to say, that “ those threats had not been executed, and the unworthy purposes for which they had been uttered had been obvious. [It is further unfortunate that Mr. Gerry should have imagined it to be his duty to remain in France near three months after the instructions reached him, busied in informal negotiations, hopeless in their nature, and unwarranted by those instructions ; in which, too, he was pointedly told, ‘ that *suspense* was ruinous to the essential interests of his country.’ ”]

Paragraph 20. “ Hitherto, instead of a [sincere and anxious] desire to obtain a reconciliation, we can discover in the French government only *empty professions* of a desire to conciliate”—

\* The following passage is in the same paragraph of the printed report : “ Mr. Y, himself, who is Mr. Bellamy, of Hamburgh, in his public vindication, declares, that ‘ he had done nothing, said nothing, and written nothing, without the orders of Citizen Talleyrand.’ ”

Paragraph 23. "On the 12th of May, the new instructions of March 23d, sent by the Sophia packet, reached Mr. Gerry, [requiring him, situated as he then was, to demand his passports and return; for, possessing no powers to negotiate, it was impossible that any circumstance mentioned in the instructions, to warrant his staying any longer in France, could exist. He was informed, too, that *suspense*, the natural consequence of his stay, was ruinous to the essential interests of his country. Mr. Gerry, however, instead of conceiving himself bound immediately to demand his passports and return, only thought himself authorized to give immediate information to the minister of foreign affairs,] and he gave immediate notice to the minister, that he should return to America in the Sophia, as soon as she could be fitted for sea. [He remained, nevertheless, much longer in France, vainly seeking pacific arrangements.]"

Paragraph 28. "Such are the proceedings of the French government, by its minister, Mr. Talleyrand, before the arrival of the printed despatches of the envoys: [and where can we find any mark of 'a sincere and anxious desire to obtain a reconciliation'?]"

Same Paragraph. After noticing the impossibility of the envoys' negotiating on the terms proposed by Mr. Talleyrand, "because directly repugnant to their instructions: [It is really surprising that such renewed propositions should not have appeared to Mr. Gerry to be, what they really were, illusory, and calculated only to amuse.]"

Paragraph 34. "While we, amused and deluded by warm but empty professions of the pacific views and wishes of France, and by [Mr. Gerry's] informal conferences, might wait in fruitless torpor, hoping for a peaceful result."

Such are the passages in my original report, on which Mr. Adams has made the atrocious charge, that "I inserted a most virulent, false and calumnious phillippic against Gerry." I need not appeal to Generals Pinckney and Marshall, who are intimately ac-

quainted with facts, and will assuredly justify all I have said; but every reader will see, that the parts struck out are only inferences and remarks on notorious facts—facts stated in the official despatches of the envoys which are signed by Mr. Gerry, or in his own official communications. But the reader cannot possibly conceive of the virulence of Mr. Adams himself, in this case, without seeing that charge in its connexions: it shall be exhibited.

Mr. Adams, having taken an unadvised step, in instituting a mission to France in February 1799, nominated Mr. Murray, then minister resident of the United States in Holland, sole minister plenipotentiary to negotiate a treaty with the government of the French Republic. The measure was condemned by the most enlightened federalists. It paralysed the public spirit, at that time roused to a proper sense of the unexampled injuries and insults of that Republic. It subverted the temple of federalism; and, burying its destroyer in its ruins, rendered strikingly applicable to Mr. Adams, his own quotation in another case—

—————Nec lex est justior ulla  
Quam necis artifices arte perire sua.

Which, as applied in this case, may be thus translated: *No law is more just, than that to the contrivers of mischief their own arts should prove fatal.* This measure, if clearly correct and patriotic, in the actual state of things, in relation to France and the United States, would not have required so long and laboured an argument, and the production of so many letters and papers for its justification. Yet it is the burden of a number of his letters to Cunningham, and of many more which he published in 1809, in the Boston Patriot. And he introduces the names of many persons who had given him information, official and unofficial, that the Directory desired to make peace; all which, in his communications to Congress in December 1798, he declared unsatisfactory; yet, in 1809, he musters them together, in order to prove the propriety, expediency, and moral certainty, of negotiating an hon-

ourable peace.\* In his message of June 21, 1798, to Congress—feeling with some force the monstrous indignities with which Pinckney, the minister of Washington, and Pinckney, Marshall and Gerry, his own ministers, had been treated and finally rejected—he said, “I will never send another minister to France, “without assurances that he will be received, respected and honoured, as the representative of a great, “free, powerful and independent nation.” In his letter No. XXXIV, March 20, 1809, to Cunningham, forgetting what he had declared eleven years before, concerning Gerry’s information, he says, “Mr. Gerry, in “an official public letter, conveyed to me, at the request of the Directory and their secretary, Talleyrand, the most positive and express assurances, that “I had demanded.” The reader will now compare this solemn asseveration with Mr. Adams’s message to the Senate, nominating Mr. Murray ; in which no use is made of Mr. Gerry’s official letter ; but of Talleyrand’s letter to Pichon, which he communicated to Mr. Murray, who sent it to his own government.†

\* Among these, was the late Dr. Logan of Pennsylvania. He was of the Society of *Friends*, whose leading principle, every one knows, is opposed to war. A gentleman of fortune, he went to Europe at his own expense. Anxious for peace, he visited Paris, in 1798, and conversed with Talleyrand, from whom he received the information to which Mr. Adams refers ; and, on his return home, in the autumn of that year, communicated the same to him. Yet, far from setting any value upon it at that time, it became a subject of his censure. In his answer, Dec. 12, 1798, to the Senate’s address, Mr. Adams says, “Although the officious interference of individuals, without public character or authority, *is not entitled to any credit*, yet it deserves to be considered whether that temerity and impertinence of individuals, affecting to interfere in public affairs, between France and the United States, whether by their secret correspondence or otherwise, and intended to impose upon the people, and separate them from their government, ought not to be inquired into and corrected.” This suggestion, doubtless, gave rise to an act of Congress to restrain such private interferences ; and its popular name was the *Logan Law*. Dr. Logan was an acquaintance of mine ; and I am perfectly satisfied of the purity of his views. From the same solicitude to preserve peace to his country, he made a voyage to England, in 1810, when there were signs of war in the American horizon. He visited British ministers—noblemen—gentlemen—farmers—in a word, some among all classes of the people, in various parts of England ; and when I saw him, on his return, he informed me, that all were averse to a war with the United States—with the single exception of one lieutenant in the navy.

† Mr. Pichon, once known in America as the charge des affaires of the French Republic, was at this time officiating in the same character in Hol-



"Gentlemen of the Senate,

"I transmit to you a document which *seems* to be intended to be a compliance with a condition mentioned at the conclusion of my message to Congress, of the 21st of June last. Always disposed and ready to embrace *every plausible appearance of probability* of preserving or restoring tranquillity, I nominate William Vans Murray, our minister resident at the Hague, to be minister plenipotentiary of the United States to the French Republic. If the Senate shall advise and consent to his appointment, effectual care shall be taken in his instructions, that he shall not go to France, without *direct* and *unequivocal* assurances from the French government, signified by their minister of foreign relations, that he shall be received in character, shall enjoy the privileges attached to his character by the law of nations, and that a minister of equal rank, title and powers, shall be appointed to treat with him, to discuss and conclude all controversies between the two republics.

JOHN ADAMS.

"Feb. 18, 1799."

The reader must be struck with what Mr. Adams assumed for the ground of this nomination, relating to a matter of very high national concern, and manifestly of great difficulty to manage, and bring to a safe and successful issue. The ground assumed did not rest on *probability*, nor the *appearance* of probability; but only on the *plausible appearance of probability*! And the business to be transacted was the same for which he had before appointed three envoys, two of whom were General Pinckney and General Marshall. Mr. Murray, though worthy and respectable, yet, standing alone, would not have received the Senate's approbation. This was manifested to the President by a committee of that body. The measure itself excited extreme surprise; and, *excepting to a few members in the Opposition party who were in the secret*, the surprise was as universal as extreme. No head of a department—not a single *federalist*—had any previous knowledge of it. The shock to the minds of federalists, generally, may be judged of by this fact: As soon as the report of the nomination to the Senate took air, a member of the House of Representatives, and a friend to Mr. Adams, came to my office, and accosted me in this

land, where Mr. Murray was resident as the Minister of the United States. The "document," mentioned by the President, was Talleyrand's letter to Pichon of Sept. 28, 1798.

manner : How is all this ? the President's nomination of Mr. Murray to be minister to France ? I answered, I know nothing more about it than you do ; I have only heard that the nomination has been made. " Why, is the man mad ? " was the member's reply.

But let us compare the different acts of Mr. Adams. If he had received " the most positive and express assurances that he had demanded," as the condition on which alone he would send another minister to France, why, in the message to the Senate, in order to reconcile them to the measure, and gain their approbation of the nomination, does he declare, that Mr. Murray shall " not go to France without *direct* and *unequivocal* " assurances from the French government, signified by " their minister of foreign relations, that he shall be received " in the manner required by his message to Congress of the 21st of June, 1798 ? The two statements are incongruous. The simple truth is, unquestionably, that the materials he had mustered up, with great diligence, and many of which he had displayed in the Boston Patriot, in 1809, and referred to in his letters to Cunningham, to justify himself for instituting the mission, were (like the British Orders in Council, dragged in by his son J. Q. Adams, to justify his active zeal and vote in imposing on our country Mr. Jefferson's ruinous embargo) the fruit of *after thoughts*. Most of them, and especially those furnished by Mr. Gerry, on which so much stress was now laid, had been a good while known to him.\* To which add the verbal communications from that gentleman to the President while remaining at Quincy. The reader shall now see of how little value they were in his estimation, only a short time before he instituted the mission.

Congress assembled in Philadelphia in December, 1798. On the 8th of that month, Mr. Adams addressed that body, according to the usage under the federal administrations, in a speech. After noticing the failure of the measures which had been taken to settle our contro-

\* Mr. Gerry arrived at Boston the first of October 1798, and delivered his budget of letters to Mr. Adams, then at Quincy, and Mr. Adams sent them to me at Philadelphia.

versies with France, and some of the outrageous acts of its government, he says, "Hitherto, therefore, nothing is discoverable in the conduct of France, which ought to change or relax our measures of defence; on the contrary, to extend and invigorate them is our true policy." Again—"It is peace that we have uniformly and perseveringly cultivated; and harmony between us and France may be restored at her option. *But to send another minister, without more determinate assurances that he would be received, would be an act of humiliation, to which the United States ought not to submit.* It must therefore be left to France (if she is, indeed, desirous of accommodation) to take the requisite steps."

The Senate, on the 12th of December, presented to the President a respectful answer to his speech, echoing his sentiments. In the President's reply we have this passage—"I have seen no real evidence of any change of system or disposition in the French Republic towards the United States." It should also be recollected, that so late as the 18th of January, 1799, just one month prior to the nomination of Mr. Murray, he laid before Congress my report on the conduct of the French government towards the United States; in the last paragraph of which is this expression—"Warmly professing its desire of reconciliation, it gives no evidence of its sincerity; but proofs in abundance demonstrate that it is not sincere." If Mr. Adams had then thought this opinion erroneous, he would have marked it to be struck out, as he did some expressions in the report which had too pointed a bearing on his favourite, Mr. Gerry.

I have already recited Mr. Adams's charge, that in my report I "inserted a most virulent, false and calumnious philippic against Gerry;" and I presume I have shown to every candid reader that the charge is utterly groundless. In truth, all the *virulence, falsehood and calumny* belong to Mr. Adams. If I forbear, in this case, to accuse him of premeditated falsehood, what excuse can be offered for the man who, for ten years,

can hoard up his resentments, and then with augmented virulence, even *carelessly* utter unfounded reproaches, which in their nature deeply affect the character of the person at whom they are pointed? I will now give the above mentioned false charge, with its connexions, from his letter No. XXXIV to Cunningham. My remarks will be included in brackets.

“ You speak of the fortunate issue of my negotiation with France to my fame!!! I cannot express my astonishment. No thanks for that action, *the most disinterested, the most determined and the most successful of my whole life*. No acknowledgment of it ever appeared among the Republicans; and the Federalists have pursued me with the most unrelenting hatred, and my children too, from that time to this.” [Without admitting the existence of that “unrelenting hatred,” it is obvious to remark, that trimmers between two parties lose the respect of both. Mr. Adams then mentions the assurances he received, that the government of the French Republic would duly admit an American minister to treat of peace; and specifies the letter before mentioned, from Mr. Talleyrand to Mr. Pichon, French charge des affaires at the Hague, to that effect, and which Pichon communicated to Murray.] “ And the assurance (says Mr. Adams) was as complete as words could express.” [Yet we have before seen that Mr. Adams assured the Senate, to whom he sent a copy of that letter, that Mr. Murray “should not go to France without *direct* and *unequivocal* assurances from the French government, signified by their minister of foreign relations, that he should be received in character.”]

“ The second assurance (says Mr. Adams) was more positive, more explicit and decisive still, and through the most authentic channel that existed. It was Mr. Gerry, one of my own ambassadors, and by way of excellence *my own ambassador*, for I had appointed him against the advice of all my ministers, to the furious provocation of Pickering,” [False—“furiously” false: there was no passion manifested by me or any



other head of a department, on the occasion. In denying any of Mr. Adams's assertions, I feel very little disposed to seek for any voucher beside my own declaration. One other head of a department, however, is still living—Governor Wolcott of Connecticut, who was then Secretary of the Treasury; and to him, if any one doubt, an appeal may be made.] “and against the “advice of all the Senators whom he could influence.” [I have before stated, that when Mr. Adams first proposed Mr. Gerry for one of the envoys, the heads of departments objected; and that Mr. Adams gave way, and substituted Chief Justice Dana of Massachusetts; but, on his declining, Mr. Adams recurred to Mr. Gerry, and in a manner to preclude, as well as I recollect, any further opposition. And as to Senators, I am perfectly satisfied, that I never spoke to any one of them. We had entire confidence in General Pinckney and General Marshall; and only wished to save them from being embarrassed with a difficult and troublesome associate; and such, to their extreme vexation and delay, Mr. Gerry proved to be.] “Mr. Gerry, in an official public letter, conveyed to me, at the request of the “Directory and their secretary, Talleyrand, the most “positive and express assurances, that I had demanded.” [Yet Mr. Adams had no confidence in them; as is manifest by the passages I have before quoted from his speech to Congress in December 1798, and in his reply to the answer of the Senate on the 12th of that month. To the Senate he said, “I have seen no real evidence “of any change of system or disposition in the French “Republic towards the United States.”] “This letter “of Mr. Gerry threw Pickering into so furious a rage “against Gerry, that in a report to me, which I requested him to draw for me to communicate to Congress, “he inserted a most virulent, false and calumnious phillippic against Gerry.” [I have had occasion to remark, that Mr. Adams, subject to the raging of furious passions, fancies, by the aid of that sublimated imagination which Hamilton ascribed to him, that the storm within his own breast is violently agitating the bosom

of another, against whom he is discharging all its fury. My feelings in relation to Mr. Gerry were of a kind *totally different from* "rage." And once for all I affirm, that in my various interviews with Mr. Adams, there was never a *single instance of passion on my part*; (I had a higher sense of the decorum proper to be observed towards the President of the United States;) and, what is not a little remarkable, but *one on his*; and this on an occasion which would not have produced in any other man the smallest emotion.\* Mr. Adams proceeds,] "I read it with amazement. I scarcely thought that prejudice and party rage could go so far. I told him it would not do; it was very injurious, and totally unfounded. I took my pen, and obliterated the whole passage as I thought, but after all I let some expressions pass which ought to have been erased." [I have already given a full account of the report. As printed, General Marshall has pronounced it correct; and the parts struck out, which I have accurately stated, every reader will see to be the natural inferences and remarks applicable to the notorious facts exhibited in public documents vouched by Mr. Gerry's own signature.] "Pickering reddened with rage or grief, as if he had

\* It was this. In 1794, John Q. Adams was appointed minister resident of the United States at the Hague. Just before General Washington's last presidency expired, he raised J. Q. Adams to the higher grade of minister plenipotentiary to Portugal. But his father soon succeeding to the office of President, he changed the son's destination from Portugal to Prussia. In making out a new commission, I called him *late minister resident of the United States at the Hague*; doubting whether it would be correct to call him *late minister plenipotentiary of the United States at the court of Lisbon*, seeing that not having gone thither, of course he had not been received in that character. I concluded, however, to submit the draught to his father, to be approved or altered, as he pleased. He read on till he came to "late minister resident of the United States at the Hague," when he burst into a passion, and with a loud and rapid voice exclaimed, "Not late minister resident at the Hague, but late minister plenipotentiary of the United States to the court of Lisbon, to which office he was appointed by General Washington—not by me—and so he shall be called." Then, lowering his tone, but speaking with earnestness, he added, "I am sorry that my son ever went abroad as a minister: "I wish he had staid at home; for there was not a pen in the United States of which the Jacobins were so much afraid as of my son's!" Where and what is now this wonderful son? Among the men whom his father called *Jacobins*—himself, of course, a *Jacobin*. And where, I may also ask, is the father? When the son *tacked*, the father *wore ship*, and followed in his *wake*, Jefferson leading the *van*; Jefferson, whom, not long before, the father pronounced "the deepest dissembler and most artful hypocrite he ever knew."

“been bereaved of a darling child.” [This is not a whit the more credible for Mr. Adams’s having declared it. While writing the parts of this letter to Cunningham, in which my name is introduced, it is evident that *his* resentments were kindled to a flame; and thence he fancied that *I* was red hot.] “He even went so far “as to beg that I would spare it, and let it go to Congress. But I was inexorable; and his hatred of me “has been unrelenting from that time to this.” [The simple history of the report is this: As the President was to communicate it to Congress, I of course submitted it to his inspection and correction. When I called for it, and found he had marked some passages to be struck out, I, with perfect calmness, observed, that it would produce some chasms, and, I apprehended, might break the connexion of some parts of the report; and therefore wished it to remain un mutilated. Mr. Adams answered, with a voice steady and slow, precisely in these words, (I here endeavour to indicate the manner by the spaces between them)—“I am not “going to send to Congress a philippic “against Mr. Gerry.” Such is the amount of this mighty affair. I took the report, and had a fair copy made, leaving out the passages and words to which the President objected; and, thus expurgated, he laid it before Congress. The parts struck out were of much less consequence than at first sight I had supposed.]

Mr. Adams’s blind prejudice in favour of Mr. Gerry was to me incomprehensible. I exhibit, elsewhere, an instance in which it rose to a ridiculous excess. Perceiving that he entertained a high opinion of General Marshall, I put his journal into Mr. Adams’s hands, hoping that some parts of it, in which his favourite was necessarily introduced, would lead him to form more correct ideas of his character. Whether he read the journal I do not know: if he did, it is plain that it had no effect; his prejudices appear to have remained unchanged.

On the 21st of September, 1798, I wrote a letter to Mr. Adams, at Quincy, of which the following is an extract.



"I have a letter from General Marshall, dated at Richmond the 15th, in which is the following passage :

"I have seldom seen more extraordinary letters than those of Mr. Talleyrand to Mr. Gerry. He must have known in what manner they would have been answered before he could have ventured to have written them. That he should have founded a demand to Mr. Gerry, for the names of certain persons, on a document proving that Mr. Gerry had asserted Mr. Talleyrand to have recognized those very persons as his agents, was as pointed an insult as could have been given. There is a fact relative to this business, not mentioned in the despatches, which deserves to be known. The company at the private dinner, to which Mr. Gerry was invited by Mr. Talleyrand, consisted of X, Y and Z. After rising from the table, X and Y renewed to Mr. Gerry, in the room and in the presence (though perhaps not in the hearing) of Talleyrand, the money propositions which we had before rejected."

About this time I received a letter from Mr. P. Johnson, chairman of an assembly of citizens of Prince Edward County in Virginia, covering an open Address to President Adams ; which I read. Numerous addresses, from all parts of the Union, had been presented to Mr. Adams, expressing the just resentment of his fellow-citizens at the deep injuries and insults which we had too long borne from the French Republic ; and applauding him for the vigour he had manifested in his endeavours to rouse his countrymen to resist and repel them. But the address from Prince Edward was of a character so different, and so charged with insults, that I refused to be the medium of conveying it to the President ; and had written a short letter to Mr. Johnson, with which to send back the address ; but, just as I was closing it, a newspaper came to hand in which the address was published. I then laid aside the letter I had written, and wrote one of considerable length to Mr. Johnson, on the conduct of the French government, in order to justify our own ; and in it inserted the anecdote of the private dinner at Talleyrand's, when the money propositions were renewed. I also mentioned Talleyrand's demand of the names of the intriguers, and that Mr. Gerry complied with the insulting request. Having caused my letter to Mr. Johnson to be printed, I enclosed a copy of it to Mr. Adams, who was pleased to notice it as in the following letter.



The reader will see that it is marked *private* ; which distinguishes it from his *official* correspondence with me. As it has been his steady aim, in his letters to Cunningham, to *vilify* me, so, in order to counteract his design, Mr. Adams is here exhibited against himself. Not that I consider approbation or praise, from a man so notoriously governed by his passions, by his ambition, vanity and family interest, of any intrinsic value ; but his eulogies and censures, when brought together, like two different substances in chemical operations, may neutralize each other.

“ Private.”

“ Quincy, Oct. 15, 1798.

“ DEAR SIR—I received your answer to the Address from Virginia, concinnate and consummate. My Secretary gave a hint of it to Mrs. Adams and she insisted upon his bringing it to her Bedside and reading it to her. She desires me to tell you, that weak and low as she is she has spirit enough left to be delighted with it. She says it is the best answer to an address that ever was written, and worth all that ever were written. You may well suppose that I, who am so severely reflected on by these compliments, am disposed enough to think them extravagant. I however think the answer excellent, and wish you had to answer all the saucy addresses I have received. I don’t intend to answer any more of the disrespectful ones.

“ I am with great esteem,

“ Mr. PICKERING.

JOHN ADAMS.”

But my letter to P. Johnson, though so acceptable to the President and Mrs. Adams, gave offence to Mr. Gerry, who wrote a letter of complaint concerning it to Mr. Adams ; and he transmitted the same to me for publication. I refused to publish it, and assigned this reason—that it would then require from me animadversions more wounding to Mr. Gerry’s feelings than any of the remarks in my letter to Mr. Johnson. Mr. Gerry’s letter was returned to the President to be restored to the writer. It was a long letter, and trifling as long. He intended it as a justification of the parts of his conduct in Paris which I had noticed in my letter to Mr. Johnson. Its publication would only have exposed him, even without comments, to additional reproach.

The foregoing details of the conduct of Mr. Gerry in Paris, and of his intercourse with the French rulers,

will, I presume, induce every reader to assent to the justness of the following summary of his character, in relation to that intercourse :—"He was charmed with their words, and duped by their professions ; he had neither spirit nor penetration sufficient to negotiate with men so bold, so cunning and so false."—I am well persuaded, notwithstanding the astonishing partiality of Mr. Adams, that towards the close of the year 1798, when the above sentiment was communicated to him, he thought it correct. It was the sentiment of a man,\* of whose discernment and judgment he has always entertained the highest opinion.

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## SECTION V.

### *LIEUT. COL. WILLIAM STEPHENS SMITH.*

MR. ADAMS, in his correspondence with Cunningham, letting slip no opportunity to revile and calumniate me, introduced the name of his son-in-law, Col. Smith, as a theme in relation to which he could vent his reproaches. But for this, *his* name would, on my part, have been consigned to oblivion. Compelled, in my own justification, to notice him, the facts stated will present a further elucidation of Mr. Adams's own character.

Col. Smith, an inhabitant of New-York, was serving in the revolutionary war, when an inspectorship was established, in 1778. Baron Steuben (a German officer, bred to arms) was appointed inspector general, and Smith became one of his deputies. The war ended in 1783. In February 1785, Congress determined on a diplomatic mission to Great-Britain, and John Adams was elected minister plenipotentiary, to represent the United States at that court. In March, Smith was elected secretary of legation for this mission ; having

\* I think it proper to say, that it was not General Marshall.

been nominated by Mr. M'Henry, a delegate from Maryland, who had also served in the army, and, in the latter period of the war, as one of the aids de camp to General Washington, by whom, in 1795, he had been appointed secretary of war, and from which office, Mr. Adams, after addressing him in opprobrious language, ejected him, a few days prior to my own removal from the department of state. This diplomatic connexion led to a family one. Colonel Smith became the son-in-law to Mr. Adams, marrying his only daughter. The mission was limited by Congress to three years, after which Smith returned to New-York.

About this time, the government of the United States was formed, under the Constitution; and when the funding system and the national bank had been established, Smith again went to England, with information of the advantages which capitalists might derive from the application of their moneys in those establishments, and in the purchase of new lands. Smith succeeded in this scheme, and large sums were placed in his hands to carry it into execution. These funds enabled him to commence a very expensive style of living, on his return to New-York. He also engaged in dashing speculations, incurred debts, and soon failed; injuring, of course, many creditors, and ruining his friend Burrows, as will presently be related. Smith was thus reduced to a state of dependence on his father-in-law; and *he*, willing to relieve himself, eagerly embraced every opportunity of providing Smith with some public office.

In July 1798, Congress passed a law for raising twelve regiments of infantry, in addition to the existing military establishment. General Washington being appointed commander in chief, he was desired to name the persons whom he would recommend to the higher offices, and particularly for the general staff. Besides the three major generals, Hamilton, Pinckney and Knox, Henry Lee, John Brooks, Wm. S. Smith or J. E. Howard, were proposed for brigadiers; Edward Hand, or Jonathan Dayton, or William S. Smith, for



adjutant general ; and Edward Carrington for quarter master general. Col. Carrington had served in that office with the southern army, under the command of General Greene ; and General Hand in the office of adjutant general, in the last years of the war.

The Secretary of War, M<sup>r</sup> Henry, having been sent to Mount Vernon with General Washington's commission, I was charged with the duties of his office during his absence, and was with Mr. Adams when he was making a list of nominations to the Senate, from that which Mr. M<sup>r</sup> Henry had transmitted from Mount Vernon by the mail. The President proposed to give rank to Col. Smith, as a brigadier, before Dayton, who had also served in the revolutionary war, and to name the latter for adjutant general ; but, pausing, he said, " I have a good mind to put Dayton before Smith, as " a brigadier, and to nominate Smith for adjutant general ; " and added, " When I was in England, several " British officers, who had conversed with Col. Smith, " told me that he would make a distinguished military " character." And then, to crown the eulogy, he said, " Why, sir, he has seen the grand reviews of the Great " Frederick, at Potsdam !" This last idea appeared, in the President's view, decisive of Smith's great military pretensions.

Leaving the President, I went to Congress hall, and sent the door-keeper to ask some of the Senators of my acquaintance to step out. I informed them of the nomination of Col. Smith to be adjutant general presently to be laid before them, and told them why I thought he ought not to be approved. The nomination was made ; and the Senate were inclined, at once, to give it their negative ; but some of Mr. Adams's particular friends, wishing to save the feelings of himself and his family, desired the Senate to postpone their decision till the next day ; and they would, in the mean time, wait on the President, and endeavour to prevail on him to withdraw the nomination. They did wait on him—but in vain ; finally telling him, however, that if the nomination were not withdrawn, it would be negatived,



"I will not withdraw the nomination," was his answer. The next morning the nomination was taken up, and negatived by all the Senators, except two. Every circumstance here stated was related to me immediately, by one or more of the Senators who were present. I certainly had expressed my opinion to not more than half a dozen Senators, all federalists; and not to one who was in the "Opposition." The presumption is therefore conclusive, that many voted from their information concerning Col. Smith, independently of any communication from me. When I come to another transaction, after the new army was disbanded, it will appear that I had not made an erroneous estimate of his character.

In letter No. XXXVIII of the "Correspondence," Mr. Adams says, "It is true that Pickering, at the instigation of Hamilton, as I suppose, *who was jealous of Smith as a favourite of Washington, and a better officer than himself*, excited a faction against him, *and to my knowledge* propagated many scandalous falsehoods concerning him, and got him negatived, though Washington had recommended him to me." Every reader must smile at Mr. Adams's fond conceit, that Alexander Hamilton was jealous of Col. Smith, as a favourite of Washington, and a better officer than himself! If there were the semblance of truth in this ridiculous assertion, it would be obvious to ask, Why then did not Washington name Smith to be inspector and major general, instead of Hamilton; and put the latter with the other two gentlemen, who were proposed as candidates for the office of adjutant general; especially as Smith had served under Steuben, in the inspector's department? But as to Hamilton's "instigation" in the case, the fact is, that about noon, on the day of the nomination of Smith, I expressed my opinion of him to some of the Senators, and the next morning it was negatived; and Hamilton, utterly ignorant of the matter, was in New-York. Mr. Adams refrains from charging me with *fabricating* "scandalous falsehoods" concerning Smith; but says I *propa-*

gated them. All that I said of him (excepting in regard to his talents, of which I did not think very highly, and I expressed what I thought) I had derived from a very credible source, several years before; and on that information gave my opinion to some Senators. It related to a private trust of magnitude, in which Col. Smith was so unfaithful, that it appeared to me unsafe to commit the confidential office of adjutant general to his hands. I was not unaware of the hazard I ran in speaking to Senators, in this case; and perfectly remember remarking to some one of them, that what I had said to him and others, would probably, by some means, come to the President's ears, and cause my removal from office; but adding—"I have done only what I thought to be my duty, and am willing to abide the consequences."

Near the close of the year 1798, General Washington came to Philadelphia, to meet Generals Hamilton and Pinckney (Knox had refused to serve, because he was not appointed the first major general) to consult on the organization of the army. Col. Smith was a candidate for the command of the regiment to be raised in the State of New-York; but Washington and the major generals received information so unfavourable to Smith's character, in point of integrity, that they did not recommend him. Unwilling however to reject him peremptorily, General Washington addressed a letter to the Secretary of War, in which is the following passage: "As well myself as the two generals  
 "whose aid I have had in the nomination, have been  
 "afflicted with the information, well or ill founded, that  
 "he stands charged, in the opinion of his fellow-citizens, with very serious instances of private misconduct, [instances which affect directly his integrity as  
 "a man. The instances alleged are various, but there  
 "is one which has come forward in a shape which did  
 "not permit us to refuse it our attention. It respects  
 "an attempt knowingly to pledge property to Major  
 "Burrows, by way of security, which was before conveyed to Mr. William Constable, without giving no-

“ tice of the circumstances, and with the aggravation  
 “ that Major Burrows had become the creditor of Col.  
 “ Smith, through friendship, to an amount which has  
 “ proved entirely ruinous to him.] While the impos-  
 “ sibility of disregarding this information forbade the  
 “ selection of Col. Smith absolutely ; yet, the possibil-  
 “ ity, that it might admit of some fair explanation, dis-  
 “ suaded from a conclusion against him. As it will be  
 “ in your power to obtain further light on this sub-  
 “ ject, it has appeared advisable to leave this matter  
 “ in the undetermined form in which it is presented,  
 “ and to assign the reason for it. You are at perfect  
 “ liberty to communicate this letter to the President.  
 “ Candour is particularly due to him in such case. It  
 “ is my wish to give him every proof of frankness, re-  
 “ spect and esteem.” This letter is dated at Philadel-  
 phia, December 13, 1798. On the 17th, Mr. M’Henry,  
 the secretary of war, wrote a very kind letter to  
 Col. Smith, and enclosed a copy of General Washing-  
 ton’s, for the purpose of obtaining the explanation of  
 the transaction referred to. Smith, on the 20th, answered  
 in a very long explanatory letter ; which, no doubt,  
 was perfectly satisfactory to his father-in-law, President  
 Adams, who was never disposed to believe any thing ad-  
 verse to the character and interest of any of his family.  
 Col. Smith was nominated to the Senate, and the nomi-  
 nation received their assent. Col. Smith’s explanation,  
 however, differed widely from that of Major Burrows,  
 whom, profiting of his generous friendship, he had reduced  
 from a genteel competency to absolute beggary ;—  
 to a condition still worse ; for, after selling his whole es-  
 tate, to fulfil his pecuniary engagements for Smith, he  
 was yet left involved, on the same account, and at the  
 mercy of his creditors, whose forbearance, only, saved  
 him from a jail.

The mission to France in 1799, suddenly instituted  
 by President Adams, striking the public mind like a  
 shock of electricity—soon paralyzed the increased and  
 increasing energies of the nation, animated with the  
 brilliant actions of our infant navy ; and there being a



prospect that a treaty of peace would be the result, the new little army was disbanded, in the summer of 1800. Col. Smith being again without employment, the President appointed him surveyor of the district of New-York, and inspector of the revenue for the ports within the same. But this appointment being made in the recess of the Senate, it was necessary to nominate him to that body, on their assembling in November 1800, at the city of Washington. This nomination (as usual when objections or doubts concerning the candidate exist) was referred to a committee, of which the late Gouverneur Morris was chairman.\* This nomination of an officer of the customs pertaining to the treasury department, the committee, of course, applied there for information. The secretary answered, that he possessed no information respecting this nomination of Col. Smith. The committee, however, received recommendations, under respectable names, in favour of Col. Smith; besides letters from the collector and naval officer, certifying Col. Smith's diligence in his new office. *It should be remembered, that Smith was then standing on his good behaviour:* his continuance in office depended on the approbation of the Senate, upon a nomination to be made to that body. Other papers were delivered to the committee by the Secretary of the Senate, which, as he informed them, had been entrusted to him for that purpose by the President of the United States. One of the latter purported to be a copy of a letter of December 13, 1793, from General Washington to the secretary of war, of which I have just given an extract. But all that part of the extract which I have included between brackets was omitted; that is, all that related to Major Burrows.

Col. Smith's name being thus again brought before the Senate, when nominated to be surveyor of the customs for the district of New-York; and gentlemen re-

\* It is proper for me to remind the reader, that I had been removed by Mr. Adams in the preceding month of May; but the facts I am going to state rest on authentic documents, copies of which are now before me.



collecting objections made two years before, which prevented Washington, with his two generals, decidedly recommending Smith for a military commission; the nomination was committed, as already mentioned. The committee received and collected, in the course of two months, a mass of information, which, some time in February 1801 (when the session of Congress and Mr. Adams's presidency were near expiring) they reported in gross to the Senate. The whole, in my copy, occupies eighty-six pages of large letter paper. The impression left on my mind, from the information I received of the transaction, from one or more of the Senators, is, *that the papers were not read in the Senate*; unless, perhaps, by some individuals, who would toil through them in the few remaining busy days of the session; and, under these circumstances, the nomination was approved, with only eight negatives, among whom was Gouverneur Morris, chairman of the committee, and perfectly possessed of all the evidence in the case; and no one will question his discernment or impartiality in judging. There are other distinguished names, among the negatives, of gentlemen still living.

But I have not done with these documents. The copy of General Washington's letter, relative to Smith, and which was communicated by President Adams, by the hands of Secretary Otis, to the Senate, was, as above remarked, essentially mutilated, *and on the specific point which required explanation, the case of Major Burrows.*

Together with the mutilated copy of General Washington's letter, President Adams sent to the Senate what purported to be a copy of Col. Smith's explanatory letter, before mentioned; but so mutilated as to be reduced from eight pages to less than four, according to the copies of both in my hands; every part respecting Burrows being omitted. But, besides the mutilations in both of these *singular copies*, there were a few interpolations; some to amend the style, and others to give a fairer aspect to Smith's explanations. By whom these alterations and amendments were made,

does not appear. Col. Smith could not have been so indiscreet ; for he had transmitted genuine copies, with other papers (ten in all) to the President of the Senate, Mr. Jefferson, to be laid before that body ; but which Mr. Jefferson sent to Mr. Morris, chairman of the committee, as appears by his letter of December 15, 1800.

Such instances of reprehensible management, as these documents exhibited, it was obviously supposed, would not be suffered to remain on the files of the Senate. President Adams did withdraw them, and (as the information rests on my memory) the very next day. Apprehensive of this, some of the Senators, by diligent application, and setting up at night, took copies of them. These copies have been fifteen or twenty years in my possession, unseen till now ; and no part of them might ever have seen the light, but for Mr. Adams's malicious calumnies, respecting my conduct in relation to Smith, in his letters to Cunningham ; *intended, with his other calumnies, eventually to be published* ; to the mortification of my children and children's children—of many affectionate relatives—and of numerous respectable friends, so long as my name should be remembered.

I leave the reader to his own reflections on this management of President Adams to obtain the Senate's approbation of his son-in-law, Col. Smith, to be surveyor of the customs at New-York ; only remarking, that the nomination appears to have taken place without the privity of the Secretary of the Treasury, to whose department the matter belonged. To the application of the committee for information, the Secretary (in his letter of Dec. 26, 1800) answered, "I possess no information respecting the nomination which the President of the United States has been pleased to make of William S. Smith, Esq. to be surveyor for the district of New-York, and inspector of the revenue for the ports in that district."

The very serious instances of private misconduct, affecting directly Col. Smith's integrity as a man, refer-

red to in General Washington's letter, and the specific case respecting Major Burrows, to which Smith ascribes the negative to his nomination as adjutant general, were unknown to me when I expressed to some Senators my opinion that it was not expedient to confer on Smith that confidential office; although, by the documents before me, I find those "serious instances" were known in New-York two years before; and hence, doubtless, the negative votes of many of the Senators may be accounted for; although Mr. Adams has been pleased, for the purpose of reproach, to ascribe to me importance and influence enough to determine the votes of the Senate: he says, that I "got Smith negativized." That opinion of mine rested wholly on the information already intimated, accidentally given me, three or four years before, by a gentleman of fair character, with whom I was acquainted. This was, Col. Smith's unfaithfulness in a trust of magnitude committed to him by Sir William Pulteney, a wealthy Englishman.

Having introduced the serious charge against Smith, in General Washington's letter, but which he said might possibly admit of a fair explanation, candour requires that I should notice what Smith said. He roundly denies, but with too much bluster, that he had "knowingly" pledged property to Burrows which was before conveyed to Mr. Constable; and says it was by a mere mistake, an inadvertence, that his titles to some real estate, already conveyed to Constable, were produced to Burrows's counsel, as of property still his own; and which, by that means, was included with other real estate then conveyed to Burrows; to whom, however, it made a difference of ten thousand dollars loss; and Smith had no other property to give as a substitute. It is not a little remarkable, that Smith should have *forgotten* the conveyance (not of long standing—perhaps a year or two) of city lots in New-York, to Constable, of the value of ten thousand dollars; though the thing is *possible*. But this explanatory letter of Smith's—if it deserve the name—is marked with ingratitude, and replete with misrepresentations, respecting Major



Burrows; as any one would perceive on the perusal of the candid statement of the latter to the Senate's committee, furnished at their request. Its great length necessarily excludes it from this Review.

After all that Burrows could obtain of Smith, towards the large sums he had been obliged to pay for him, Smith remained deeply his debtor. Burrows then commenced a suit against him, with a view to get hold of any property of his which might be discovered. Smith found bail; but the bail being alarmed, they insisted on Smith's relieving them, by surrendering himself to the sheriff; who must have committed him to jail. In this forlorn situation, Smith wrote to Burrows, praying to be relieved; for he was then going from camp to New-York, to save his bail. That generous hearted man, totally ruined as he had been by Smith, instantly relieved him; saying, he would rather burn his bond than disgrace or injure him. General Hamilton wrote to Burrows for the same purpose; and, as the letter is not a long one, and has, besides its kindness, some pleasantry in it, I give it entire; the rather, because Mr. Adams represents Hamilton (ridiculous as is the idea) to have been jealous of Smith's superior military talents, and his enemy.

#### GENERAL HAMILTON'S LETTER TO MAJOR BURROWS.

*"New-York, March 10, 1800.*

"DEAR SIR,

"The anxiety of Col. Smith's bail to your suit had like to have shut him up yesterday in our prison. The good nature of Col. Troup\* interposed to save him from the disgrace. You would have been sorry if it had happened—because you are not vindictive, and because it would utterly have ruined him, without doing you the least good. Many considerations induce me to second the advice you will receive from Col. Troup—namely, to accept *John Doe* and *Richard Roe*, characters of ancient renown in the law, for your bail, and to proceed to judgment on that basis. If Smith has any real estate, that will secure it; and as to his body, it had better continue fat and jolly, to present a good front to his country's enemies, than to be sent to pine and grow meagre in a nasty jail. Adieu.

Your's truly, A. HAMILTON."

\* Col. Troup was Major Burrows's counsel.



I have but slightly adverted to Col. Smith's unfaithfulness in the trust he accepted from Sir William Pulteney. I am now possessed of particular and authentic details of his gross mismanagement (to use a gentle term) of the property of that gentleman, and of Governor Hornby; together, amounting to sixty thousand pounds sterling (equal to 266,400 dollars) committed to Smith, to be applied (on very liberal commissions) to their use, in the United States; where advantageous speculations presented, in the purchase of funded debt, bank stock, and new lands; but of which Smith made no returns. The whole was so soon dissipated, that in 1796 he began to borrow money; and before the close of that year he ruined his friend Burrows. The agents of Pulteney and Hornby gathered something from the wrecks of the property acquired by Smith with their funds.

I forbear to say more on this subject; what I have stated being sufficient to show the substantial correctness of the information on which I thought myself bound to interfere, to prevent his obtaining the office of adjutant general.

The statement I have here made suggests the following questions. Can it be supposed that Mr. Adams was ignorant of Col. Smith's conduct in relation to the funds of Pulteney and Hornby? If not uninformed, what can be offered to justify his nominating him to an office in the *Revenue* department of the United States? And why was the nomination made (as it seems to have been) without the privity of the secretary of the treasury?

Col. Smith lost his office in the revenue department in the following manner:

The name of General Miranda was familiar in the United States, at one period of Mr. Jefferson's presidency. He was a Spaniard, born (as I understood) in one of the Spanish American provinces. He had been in France, at one period of her revolution; and, serving in her armies, in the rank of major general, barely escaped the guillotine, when it was so common to cut

off the heads of their military commanders. After this, Miranda came to America, and visited the city of Washington, where he spent some time. From thence he repaired to New-York, and there engaged practically in a project of revolutionizing one of the Spanish provinces. A band of Americans, encouraged perhaps by visions of wealth to be acquired in the country of silver and gold, were induced to embark with him in the expedition. Col. Smith, then surveyor of the customs for the New-York district, aided Miranda, in forwarding the enterprise; and, if I do not mistake, permitted one of his sons to go with him. This wild, because so premature a project, and so deficient in means, necessarily failed, and the Americans were made prisoners. The Spanish minister complained of this outrage against the territory of a nation with whom the United States were at peace. The thing was notorious. To appease the Spaniard, President Jefferson deprived Smith of his office; and the expedition having been set on foot, and the means for it prepared, within the United States, in violation of an express law of the Union, Smith was prosecuted for a breach of it. His apology for engaging in it was, that Miranda informed him, that Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison approved of his plan. This was stated by Smith, soon after he had been deprived of his office, in a long letter to his brother-in-law, J. Q. Adams, then in the Senate of the United States. Smith, thinking that in Miranda's information gentlemen would find an excuse for his engaging in the expedition, desired the letter might be shown; and Mr. Adams put it into my hands to read.

## SECTION VI.

*ALEXANDER HAMILTON.*

IN Mr. Hamilton's Letter on the Public Conduct and Character of John Adams, President of the United States, published in 1800, prior to the election of President and Vice President, to take place in December of that year, Mr. Adams is censured for his various measures which resulted in the institution (in February 1799) of a mission to France, to negotiate a treaty with her government. This last measure, suddenly taken, without the previous knowledge of a single federalist, in or out of the government, occasioned universal surprise. A decided majority of the nation had been roused to a just resistance of French aggressions. Success attended the vigorous measures of the United States; French armed vessels were captured; and our commerce received protection. A continuance of the same spirited measures would naturally increase the public ardour.

In this state of things, Mr. Hamilton expressed his belief, that there was a real alteration in public opinion; and, hence, that a negotiation to restore peace and a friendly intercourse with France, might be more safely and advantageously conducted at Philadelphia than at Paris; without hazard of dangerous intrigues by any French minister who should be sent to the United States. Mr. Adams takes this occasion to say not only that Hamilton's conceptions of public opinion were erroneous, but intimates *that he was incapable of judging correctly in the case*; for which he assigns these reasons—  
 “That he was born and bred in the West Indies, till  
 “he went to Scotland for education, where he spent  
 “his time in a seminary of learning till seventeen years  
 “of age; *after which, no man ever acquired a national*  
 “*character*; then entered a college at New-York, from  
 “whence he issued into the army an aid de camp. In

“ these situations he could scarcely acquire the opinions, “ feelings or principles of the American people.”\* This quotation presents a statement marked with Mr. Adams’s usual incorrectness ; and his inference from his assumed facts is on a par with his statement. To exhibit his errors, and at the same time gratify the reader, I will subjoin a sketch of Mr. Hamilton’s early life.

This eminent man, the son of a Scotch merchant, was born in the island of Nevis, in the West Indies ; and, as soon as he was old enough to be so employed, became a clerk in the counting house of Nicholas Cruger, a merchant from New-York, who was settled in the island of St. Croix. Boy as he was, the consciousness of a superior intellect satisfied him that a merchant’s store was not the proper place for the exertion of his talents. When past the age of thirteen years, he was sent to New-York for his education. After the preparatory school instruction, he entered the college in that city. The controversy between the British Colonies and the Mother Country employed, at that period, the tongues and the pens of the most eminent men in America. Hamilton, though engaged in his collegiate exercises, was not an unobserving spectator of the passing scenes.

“ In this contest with Great-Britain (says Dr. Mason) “ which called forth every talent and every passion, “ Hamilton’s juvenile pen asserted the claims of the “ Colonies, against writers from whom it would derogate to say that they were merely respectable. An “ unknown antagonist, whose thrust was neither to be “ repelled nor parried, excited inquiry ; and when he “ began to be discovered, the effect was so apparently “ disproportioned to the cause, that his papers were “ ascribed to a statesman who then held a happy sway “ in the councils of his country, who has since rendered her most essential services, and who still lives to “ adorn her name.† But the truth could not long be

\* Letter XII, May 26, 1809, published in the Boston Patriot.

† John Jay.



“concealed. The powers of Hamilton created their own evidence; and America saw, with astonishment, a lad of seventeen\* in the rank of her advocates, at a time when her advocates were patriots and sages.”†

In the year 1775, after the commencement of hostilities, “Hamilton attached himself to one of the uniform companies of militia then forming in the city for the defence of the country, and devoted much time and attention to their exercises. In the early part of 1776, he received, from the Provincial Congress of New-York, the appointment of captain of one of the independent companies of artillery.”‡ “It was while he was training this company, that, for the first time he was seen by General Greene; to whose discerning eye something more appeared in the conduct of the young captain than was ordinarily exhibited in the parade exercises of that office.”§ Near the close of the campaign of 1776, Hamilton was introduced into General Washington’s family, as an aid de camp. In this situation he continued until the winter of 1780–1. In 1782–3, he was a delegate from the State of New-York in the Congress of the United States. It was while a member of that body that he saw the letters and communications from our ministers at European courts, and among them those of John Adams, then minister plenipotentiary to the States of Holland, and one of the commissioners for negotiating a peace with Great-Britain. These negotiations were carried on at Paris, to which city Mr. Adams came from the Hague. Mr. Jay, already there, had taken certain decisive preliminary steps, without the concurrence of Dr. Franklin, our resident minister in France, and another of the peace commissioners. Franklin, caressed by the French, was disposed implicitly to obey an instruction

\* Col. Nicholas Fish, a fellow student of Hamilton’s, informs me that he was about eighteen; and that he saw some of Hamilton’s essays before they went to the press.

† Doctor Mason’s oration on the death of Hamilton.

‡ Letter of December 26, 1823, from Col. Fish.

§ Judge Johnson’s Life of Greene.

from Congress, wholly different in spirit from former acts of that body, and unworthy of its well earned public reputation. The object of that instruction was, to submit the terms of the treaty of peace with Great-Britain absolutely to the French court, excepting in the single article of our independence. This instruction was obtained, undoubtedly, through the influence of the French minister to the United States, the Count de la Luzerne, and of the able secretary of legation, Mr. Marbois. Had this instruction been implicitly obeyed, and had the British government concurred with the plans of the French court, the fisheries, the territory west of the Allegany mountain, and the navigation of the Mississippi, would have been lost to the United States. Mr. Jay, with the foresight, wisdom, firmness and patriotism which have always distinguished him, resisted: he laid aside his instructions, and alone commenced the negotiation, in a manner to do honour to an able, upright and independent American citizen. Mr. Adams came to Paris: his views coincided with Mr. Jay's; and, eventually, Dr. Franklin co-operated with them. Peace was made on terms advantageous beyond the most sanguine expectations; notwithstanding which, an attempt was made by the members under French influence—for there was then, as there has been since, a French party in Congress—to censure the commissioners; but it failed; and praise instead of censure was bestowed on them. Hamilton, “dreading  
 “the preponderance of foreign influence, as the natural  
 “disease of a popular government, was struck at the  
 “appearance, in the very cradle of our republic, of a  
 “party actuated by an undue complaisance to foreign  
 “power; and resolved at once to resist this bias in our  
 “affairs;” “a resolution (says Hamilton) which has  
 “been the chief cause of the persecution I have en-  
 “dured in the subsequent stages of my political life.”\*

The agency of Mr. Adams in the peace negotiation made a favourable impression on the mind of Hamil-

\* Hamilton's Letter on the Public Conduct and Character of John Adams, President of the United States.

ton, but not without alloy. A scrutiny of Mr. Adams's several communications to Congress produced in the mind of Hamilton the following result: He says, "I then adopted an opinion, which all my subsequent experience has confirmed, that he is of an imagination sublimated and eccentric; propitious neither to the regular display of sound judgment, nor to steady perseverance in a systematic plan of conduct; and I began to perceive, what has been since too manifest, that to this defect are added the unfortunate foibles of a vanity without bounds, and a jealousy capable of discolouring every object."\* I greatly mistake if the reader has not found, in this Review, abundant confirmation of the correctness of Hamilton's opinion.

It was in the year 1777, that I first saw Hamilton, and perceived his importance in the military family of General Washington. The subsequent acts of his public life, and the eminent and disinterested services he rendered to the United States, inspired me with the highest ideas of his talents and worth. As an Aid de Camp to the Commander in Chief, he saw the principal operations of the main army during four years; but had no command of troops, except of a detachment at the siege of Yorktown, with which he stormed and took a redoubt. A man of genius, however, will promptly grasp any subject; while a common mind is learning the rudiments, which, by slow degrees, are to conduct him to the knowledge of it. When, therefore, in 1798, a small army was to be raised, in addition to our peace establishment, I had no hesitation as to the person best qualified to command it. Of the citizens of the United States *who had seen service*, I knew not one to place in competition with him. It was while I was in this state of mind, that the following dialogue took place between Mr. Adams and me.

*Mr. Adams.*—"Whom shall we appoint commander in chief?"—"Colonel Hamilton." Mr. Adams made no reply. On another day, he repeated the same question, and I gave him the same answer: he did not

\* The same Letter.



reply. On another day, he for the third time asked me, "Whom shall we appoint commander in chief?" and the third time I answered "Colonel Hamilton." "O no!" replied Mr. Adams, "it is not his turn by a great deal; I would sooner appoint Gates, or Lincoln, or Morgan." Instantly I rejoined to this effect: "General Morgan is here a member of Congress, now very sick, apparently with one foot in the grave; certainly a very brave and meritorious officer, in our revolutionary war; and perhaps his present sickness may be the consequence of the hardships and sufferings to which he was then subjected; but, if he were in full health, the command of a brigade would be deemed commensurate with his talents. As for Gates, he is now an old woman; and Lincoln is always asleep."\* Mr. Adams made no reply.

Washington being, on this occasion, appointed commander in chief, the secretary of war (M<sup>c</sup>Henry) was directed to carry his commission to Mount Vernon. Knowing Mr. Adams's aversion to Hamilton, and apprehensive that he would either not be called into service, or if nominated to any office, that it would be in a rank so much below his merit that he would not and ought not to accept it, I took the liberty of writing to General Washington the following letter.†

\* My remark on the military characters of the gentlemen named by Mr. Adams, whom he would prefer to Hamilton for the command of the army, may perhaps be thought not quite so respectful to the President of the United States as became the dignity of his station. But if it was frankness in excess, it will at least show that I was not inclined to "mask" my opinions. My remark was instantaneous, but calm. Mr. Adams has totally misrepresented my character. All my life long I have been so accustomed freely to express my opinions, that some of my friends have occasionally regretted that I was so little reserved; that I did not conceal my sentiments, when, though correct, they might give offence; in a word, that I did not sometimes wear a "mask."—I meant no reproach to Lincoln. His lethargic habit was a constitutional infirmity. When I made the winter campaign, in 1776-7, with the Massachusetts militia under his command, he told me, that prior to the war, when he represented the town of Hingham in the legislature, he used to ride home (a distance, then, of 16 to 20 miles) every Saturday night, on horseback, and commonly slept half the way. It was easy for him to fall asleep at any time, when in a sitting posture. In other respects he was a vigilant officer. But at this time he was a cripple from a wound received in the revolutionary war, and of an advanced age.

† I desire it may be noticed, that when I wrote this letter, I had read no



*Philadelphia, July 6, 1798, 11 o'clock at night.*

"SIR—My attachment to my country, and my desire to promote its best interests, I trust, have never been equivocal; and at this time I feel extreme anxiety that our army should be organized in the most efficient manner. The enemy whom we are preparing to encounter, veterans in arms, led by able and active officers, and accustomed to victory, must be met by the best blood, talents, energy and experience that our country can produce. Great military abilities are the portion of but few men, in any nation, even the most populous and warlike. How very few, then, may we expect to find in the United States! In them the arrangements should be so made that not one might be lost.

"There is one man who will gladly be your second, but who will not, I presume, because I think he ought not to be the second to any other military commander in the United States. You too well know Col. Hamilton's distinguished ability, energy and fidelity to apply my remark to any other man. But to ensure his appointment, I apprehend the weight of your opinion may be necessary. From the conversation that I and others have had with the President, there appears to be a disinclination to place Col. Hamilton in what we think is his proper station, and that alone in which we suppose he will serve—the *Second* to you, and the *Chief* in your absence. In any war, and especially in such a war as now impends, a commander in chief ought to know and have a confidence in the officers most essential to ensure success to his measures. In a late conversation with the President, I took the liberty to observe, that the army in question not being yet raised, the only material object to be contemplated in the early appointment of the commander in chief would be, that he might be consulted, because he ought to be satisfied, in the choice of the principal officers who should serve under him.

"If any considerations should prevent your taking the command of the army, I deceive myself extremely if you will not think that it should be conferred on Col. Hamilton. And in this case it may be equally necessary, as in the former, that you should intimate your opinion to the President. Even Col. Hamilton's political enemies, I believe, would repose more confidence in him than in any other military character that can be placed in competition with him.

"This letter is in its nature confidential, and therefore can procure me the displeasure of no one: but the appointment of Col. Hamilton, in the manner suggested, appears to me of such vast importance to the welfare of the country, that I am willing to risk any consequences of my frank and honest endeavours to secure it. On this ground I assure myself you will pardon the freedom of this address.

I am, with perfect respect,

Sir, your most obedient servant,

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

"P. S. Mr. McHenry is to set off to-morrow, or on Monday, bearing your commission.

"General WASHINGTON."

sort of communication with Hamilton on the subject: it was a spontaneous act on my part to secure his services to the country.

To this letter, I was favoured with a long and confidential answer, dated July 11th, in which the General went into a consideration of the kind of warfare to be expected, in case of an invasion by the French, and to which the military arrangements should have relation. The following paragraph is the only one I feel at liberty to introduce ; and this, because important in justification of my conduct on the occasion.

“Of the abilities and fitness of the gentleman you have named for a high command in the *Provisional Army*, I think as you do, and that his services ought to be secured at *almost* any price. What the difficulties are that present themselves to the mind of the President, in opposition to this measure, I am entirely ignorant ; but in *confidence*, and with the frankness you have disclosed your own sentiments on this occasion, I will unfold mine, under the view I have taken of the prospect before us ; and shall do it concisely.”

I was also happy in finding my ideas on this subject coincident with those of Mr. Jay, who was then Governor of New-York. In his letter to me, dated July 18, 1798, he said, “Being of the number of those who expect a severe war with France *the moment she makes peace with Britain*, I feel great anxiety that nothing “may be omitted to prepare for it ;”—and then, glancing at the kind of generals we should have to contend with, Mr. Jay proceeded—“I cannot conceal from “you my solicitude that the late secretary of the treasury” [Hamilton] “may be brought forward in a “manner corresponding with his talents and services. “It appears to me that his former military station and “character, taken in connexion with his late important “place in the administration, would justify measuring “his rank by his merit and value.”

The unexampled insults and injuries inflicted by France on the government and people of the United States, as herein before described, were sufficient, an impartial observer would suppose, to rouse the spirit of every American citizen to a determined resistance, and to repel force by force. But this unhappily was not the case : many of our citizens appeared more inclined to criminate their own government than that of France. There was, however, a decided majority well

disposed to provide the means of protecting our commerce, and defending our country. Our treaties with France, grossly violated on her part, ceased to be obligatory on the United States ; and Congress declared them to be void. Naval hostilities were authorized by an act of Congress, for the purpose of capturing all French armed vessels. Several of these were taken ; and our commerce received protection.

In this state of things, apprehensions were entertained that a formal war with France might ensue. A peace between her and England, for which the party (with the celebrated Mr. Fox at its head) in opposition to the government, were zealously contending, would remove the only obstruction to an invasion of our country by a French fleet and army. Under these circumstances, a prudent foresight justified and required the raising of a small army, as a suitable preparatory measure of defence. It would be a *nucleus*, around which should it become necessary, additional forces might be collected, to whom the previous training of the former would facilitate the speedy acquisition of the knowledge of discipline, to qualify them for actual service. Accordingly, Congress authorized the raising of twelve regiments of infantry and six troops of cavalry, in addition to the small peace establishment. But the same party in our country, which had before steadily opposed the federal administration, resisted the present measure. Indeed, no inconsiderable portion of our citizens appeared willing to make any sacrifice to France, although at the expense of the honour as well as the interests of their own country. For this reason, especially, it was deemed expedient to place in the command of the army its most popular military citizen ; and on Washington it was accordingly conferred. This policy was doubtless correct. But, for myself, I thought only of that man of eminent talents who had been in service during nearly the whole of our revolutionary war, and the greater part of the time in General Washington's military family : this was Colonel Hamilton. I knew Washington's advanced age, and his strong predilec-

tion for a retired and rural life. He had himself avowed it. I knew that so long before as 1783, when he resigned to Congress his military commission, he manifested a determination never again to appear in office on the national theatre.\* And after he retired from the presidency, I had not contemplated any future crisis in the affairs of our country, which would render it proper to interrupt his repose, and call him from that retirement to the field.†

The Secretary of War, when charged with Washington's commission, was instructed by the President to consult the General as to the principal officers to be appointed to the army; and he transmitted, from Mount Vernon, by the mail, the General's list, containing the names of gentlemen who had served in the revolutionary army, and designated the stations in which they should be placed. At the head of this list, and in the following order, were the names of

Alexander Hamilton, inspector general and major general;

Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, major general;

Henry Knox, major general.

And in this order they were nominated to the Senate. When the nominations were taken up for consideration, some of the Senators, who knew Mr. Adams's antipathy to Hamilton, proposed (as I was at the time informed) that they should act on the nomination of Hamilton, and postpone their decision on the other two till the next day; lest, if all were approved on the same day, in which case all their commissions would bear the same date, Mr. Adams should derange that order, and raise Pinckney and Knox above Hamilton.

\* "I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life," were his words. Congress journal, Dec. 23, 1783.

† How distressing it was to him to be called forth at the period here referred to, cannot be more forcibly expressed than in his own words: "If a crisis should arrive, when a sense of duty, or a call from my country, should become so imperious as to leave me no choice, I should prepare for relinquishment, and go with as much reluctance from my present peaceful abode, as I should go to the tombs of my ancestors."—Letter from the General in answer to Col. Hamilton's of May 19, 1798, in Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. v, p. 748.



But it was answered, that it was the constant usage,\* that persons nominated and approved, on the same day, to the same grade of office, should take the rank in the order in which they were nominated and approved; and that surely Mr. Adams would not violate that established rule. So the Senate approved of all the three nominations on the same day.†

For some cause or other—I supposed under the impulse of the irritation occasioned by the negative put by the Senate on his son-in-law Col. Smith, as before related—Mr. Adams very suddenly, and without apprising the heads of departments of his intention, pushed off for Quincy, the place of his residence near Boston; leaving his “incompetent secretaries”‡ at the seat of government, to perform, besides the ordinary executive duties, those arising from the acts of the very important session of Congress just ended. There was at that time no navy department; and the issuing of commissions of letters of marque had been assigned to the department of state. These being prepared, I went to the President’s house, by nine in the morning (the day I do not recollect) to obtain his signature; when, to my astonishment, his steward informed me that he had already set off for Quincy. I hastened back to my office, made up a packet of blank commissions, and forwarded them by mail to New-York, to the care of one of his sons then living in that city. There the packet came to the President’s hands. He signed the commissions, and returned them to me. But this caused a delay of two or three days, when a number of merchant vessels, in different ports, armed and manned for letters of marque, and ready for sea, were waiting for their commissions.

The Secretary of War made out the commissions for Hamilton first, Pinckney second, and Knox third, major general, and sent them to Quincy, for the Presi-

\* Grounded on a resolve of the Old Congress, January 4, 1776.

† Congress had already adjourned; and the senators, impatient to depart, remained in session only to pass on the military nominations. It was then the middle of July.

‡ Such, I remember to have been informed, was the term by which he sometimes designated the heads of departments.

dent's signature. He wrote to the Secretary, that in his opinion Knox was entitled to rank as first major general, Pinckney as the second, and Hamilton as the third; and directed, that if General Washington should concur in that opinion, he should conform the commissions to that order. Possessed of this information, and having already interested myself to secure to Hamilton the first place after the commander in chief, I addressed, on the first of September, a second letter to Washington; in which I examined at large the alleged reasons for giving Knox the precedence, and demonstrated (as I thought) their invalidity. The General honoured me with his answer, dated the 9th. It was a long letter, in relation to the new army. The following extracts, pointing most directly to the present subject, are all that I need introduce.

“Your private letter of the first instant came duly to hand, and I beg you to be persuaded that no apology will ever be necessary for any confidential communications you may be disposed to entrust me with.

“In every public transaction of my life, my aim has been to do that which appeared to me to be most conducive to its weal. Keeping this object always in view, no local considerations, or private gratifications, incompatible therewith, can ever render information displeasing to me from those in whom I have confidence, and who, I know, have the best opportunities of acquiring a knowledge of facts in matters which may be interesting to our country, and essential for myself as its servant.

“Having troubled you with this exordium and egotism, I do not only thank you for the full and judicious observations relative to the discontents of General Knox, at being appointed junior major general in the augmented corps, but I shall do the same for your further occasional remarks on this, or any other subject which may be interesting and proper for me to know; that I may thereby regulate my own conduct in such a manner as to render it beneficial and acceptable to the community, in matters which depend on correct information not in my power to obtain in the ordinary course, without aid.”

The General then mentions his early writing to General Knox, stating the *principle* upon which the arrangement of the major generals had been made; and that he was not a little surprised to find in his answer an expression of great dissatisfaction at the measure. General Washington replied, in order to conciliate Knox; but in vain.

Before the Secretary of War could have written to and received an answer from General Washington, respecting the order in which the three major generals should take rank, another letter was received from the President, peremptorily requiring him to make out their commissions in the order of Knox, Pinckney, Hamilton. Upon which I again wrote to General Washington. The subsequent decisive proceeding on *his* part finally induced the President (certainly to his extreme mortification) to recur to the old rule, from which he ought never to have departed; and the commissions were made out according to the General's arrangement. The President's departure from it was a violation of the general condition on which Washington accepted the chief command.

Several motives to this incorrect conduct of President Adams may be assigned. Primarily, his unrelenting hatred of Hamilton; whom, utterly regardless of the public interest in his services, he would have driven from the army, by degrading him from the rank to which his merit and actual appointment entitled him. In the next place, he would have expected from Knox a degree of subserviency to his views which was not to be expected from Hamilton. Lastly, he had received from Knox a flattering letter, expressing his unqualified admiration of the President's measures. And to a man of Mr. Adams's unbounded vanity, nothing could be so grateful, nothing so influential, as flattery. In this letter, Knox suggested a variety of measures, and on a liberal scale, which he thought should be taken, effectually to resist and defeat an invasion by the French; and he concluded with *a tender of his humble abilities for any sort of service to which they should be thought equal*.\*

After such an expression of the humble sense of his own abilities, and of his readiness to serve in any station to which they should be deemed adequate, it must surprise every one to find that his *humility* was offended

\* I have a copy of this letter, taken from the original, which, by Mr. Adams's direction, I deposited in the war-office.



because he was not placed *above* all other officers, Washington only excepted: but such was the fact; and for that reason he refused to serve at all. In a letter to me, General Knox said, "The present view of the subject is, that Mr. Hamilton's talents have been estimated upon a scale of comparison so transcendent, that all his seniors in rank and years of the late army have been degraded by his elevation. Whether this estimate has been perfectly correct, or whether the consequences will be for the happiness of the country, time will discover."

It is the more remarkable that Knox should insist on the first rank as a major general, seeing the arrangement had been made by General Washington, for whom he always manifested the most profound respect; and the General always appeared to me to entertain towards Knox a peculiar and very strong attachment. In a letter to Hamilton, in reference to the arrangement of him and Pinckney, Washington said, "With respect to my friend General Knox, whom I love and esteem, I have ranked him below you both." If there was in the revolutionary army but *one* officer whom he *loved*, Knox was that one. In this case we see exemplified the sentiment expressed to me by the General in his letter of Sept. 9, before quoted—*That in every public transaction of his life, the public weal, and not private gratifications, governed him.* No person acquainted with Hamilton and Knox could hesitate a moment in deciding to whom the preference was due.

Mr. Adams has been unwearied in his attempts to degrade Hamilton in the eyes of his fellow-citizens: he has been so indiscreet as to deny him, what all the world beside allow him, very eminent talents. According to Mr. Adams, his son-in-law Col. Smith, in the military line, was much superior to Hamilton: And having, in many letters published in the Boston Patriot in 1809, labouring to vindicate the mission to France instituted in 1799, commented on various passages of Hamilton's letter of 1800, when Adams was a second time a candidate for the presidency, he con-



cludes his 16th letter with these words : " I have no more to say on this great subject. Indeed I am weary of exposing puerilities that would disgrace the awkwardest boy at college." After this shot, the following comparison of Mr. Gerry and Hamilton, as financiers, will occasion no surprise.

In his 13th letter, dated May 29, 1809, published in the Boston Patriot, Mr. Adams, speaking of his favourite, Gerry, as one of the ministers to negotiate with the French Republic, against whom he supposes prejudices had been entertained, says, " No man had a greater share in propagating and diffusing these prejudices against Mr. Gerry than Hamilton ; *whether he had formerly conceived jealousies against him as a rival candidate for the Secretaryship of the Treasury* :—for Mr. Gerry was a financier, and had been employed for years on the treasury in the old Congress, and a most indefatigable member too :—" that committee had laid the foundation for the present system of the treasury, and had organized it almost as well :—" I knew that the officers of the treasury, in Hamilton's time, dreaded to see him rise in the House upon any question of finance, because they said he was a man of so much influence, that they always feared he would discover some error, or carry some point against them :—or whether he [Hamilton] feared that Mr. Gerry would be President of the United States before him, I know not." !!!

It appears by Cunningham's letters to Mr. Adams, that the latter had written two concerning Hamilton, filled with matters of such a character that he would not leave them in Cunningham's hands : he insisted on their being returned to him, and they were returned : but their contents are intimated in Cunningham's answers. The accusations are of atrocious vices. One, that Hamilton was totally destitute of *integrity*. The whole of the world where Hamilton was known will acquit him of this charge, and with scorn repel the foul calumny. And every reader of this Review will have seen the licentiousness of Mr. Adams's pen, and how

little credit is due to any of his statements concerning those who are the subjects of his envy, hatred or revenge.

In Cunningham's letter XXXVII, to Adams, dated May 6, 1809, he states, that Mr. Adams informed him, that the testimony of General Washington in Hamilton's favour was given under a threatening of a public exposure of his mistakes. "You, sir, know," says Cunningham, "what authority I have for the declaration—General Washington was overawed with a menace." In a note Cunningham adds, "Mr. Adams is my authority for all this, and more." Every man who knew Washington will pronounce this, whoever might be the author, an atrocious falsehood. In the conscious purity of intention in all his actions, while he entertained a modest opinion of himself, he would not have endured such an insult from any human being; and all who knew Hamilton will pronounce him utterly incapable of offering it.

Here I conclude all that I think proper for me to say respecting Mr. Hamilton, in regard to Mr. Adams's reproaches, in his correspondence with Cunningham. His animadversions on Hamilton, in his letters published in the same year (1809) in the Boston Patriot, which occupy nearly fifty pages in octavo, so far as the same may merit any notice, will have the attention of Hamilton's biographer. That the work is not yet commenced, or in progress, is a subject of deep regret.

But as Hamilton has formerly been accused of cherishing highly aristocratic views of government, and, as a member of the General Convention which formed the Constitution of the United States, would have infused that spirit into it, I subjoin his letter to me on that subject. It is an answer to one I wrote to him, stating that it had been asserted, "that in the General Convention he had proposed, *that the President of the United States, and the Senators, should be chosen for life* ; and that his accusers alleged that this was intended as an introduction to Monarchy." On this accusation I made the following remark : "If the propo-

"sition was offered in the Convention, your friends will know to what motives to ascribe it; and that, whatever form of government you may have suggested for *consideration*, the public welfare, and the permanent liberty of your country, were not the less objects of pursuit with you, than with the other members of the Convention." On this subject I requested information.

Hamilton's answer is too valuable to be lost. By introducing it into this Review, it may be preserved long enough to be used by his biographer, while in the mean time it will gratify surviving friends who deeply respect his memory. I give it here, verbatim, from the original now before me.

"New-York, September 16, 1803.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I will make no apology for my delay in answering your inquiry some time since made, because I could offer none which would satisfy myself. I pray you only to believe that it proceeded from any thing rather than want of respect or regard. I shall now comply with your request.

"The highest toned propositions, which I made in the Convention, were for a President, Senate and Judges during good behaviour—a House of Representatives for three years. Though I would have enlarged the legislative power of the General Government, yet I never contemplated the abolition of the State Governments; but, on the contrary, they were, in some particulars, constituent parts of my plan.

"This plan was in my conception conformable with the strict theory of a government purely republican; the essential criteria of which are, that the principal organs of the executive and legislative departments be elected by the people, and hold their offices by a *responsible* and temporary or *defeasible* tenure.

"A vote was taken on the proposition respecting the Executive. Five States were in favour of it; among these Virginia; and though from the manner of voting, by delegations, individuals were not distinguished, it was morally certain, from the known situation of the Virginia members (six in number, two of them, *Mason* and *Randolph*, professing popular doctrines) that Madison must have concurred in the vote of Virginia. Thus, if I sinned against republicanism, Mr. Madison was not less guilty.

"I may truly then say, that I never proposed either a President, or Senate, for life; and that I neither recommended nor meditated the annihilation of the State Governments.

"And I may add, that in the course of the discussions in the Convention, neither the propositions thrown out for debate, nor even



those voted in the earlier stages of deliberation, were considered as evidences of a definitive opinion in the proposer or voter. It appeared to me to be in some sort understood, that with a view to free investigation, experimental propositions might be made, which were to be received merely as suggestions for consideration.

"Accordingly it is a fact, that my final opinion was against an Executive during good behaviour, on account of the increased danger to the public tranquillity incident to the election of a Magistrate of this degree of permanency. In the plan of a Constitution, which I drew up while the Convention was sitting, and which I communicated to Mr. Madison about the close of it, perhaps a day or two after, the office of President has no greater duration than for three years.

"This plan was predicated upon these bases. 1. That the political principles of the people of this country would endure nothing but republican governments. 2. That, in the actual situation of the country, it was in itself right and proper that the republican theory should have a fair and full trial. 3. That to such a trial it was essential that the government should be so constructed as to give it all the energy and stability reconcileable with the principles of that theory. These were the genuine sentiments of my heart, and upon them I acted.

"I sincerely hope, that it may not hereafter be discovered, that through want of sufficient attention to the last idea, the experiment of Republican Government, even in this country, has not been as complete, as satisfactory and as decisive as could be wished.

"Very truly, dear sir, your friend and servant,

"TIMOTHY PICKERING, ESQ."

A. HAMILTON."

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## SECTION VII.

### *WASHINGTON.*

IN this review of Mr. Adams's Correspondence with Cunningham—passing by many things of minor consequence—I have noticed nearly all of his principal reproaches; and shown, I trust satisfactorily, that they are calumnies, and calumnies of the most disgraceful kind; that, in his laboured attempts to justify some important acts of his administration, he has manifested as little regard to truth as to consistency; and that those acts, which he solemnly avers were dictated solely by a sincere and virtuous regard to the public welfare,



originated in his unrestrained ambition.—There remain to be noticed two accusations in his letter, No. XVII, Nov. 25, 1808, to Cunningham, where, referring to me, he says, “No man I ever knew had so deep a contempt for Washington. I have had numerous proofs of it from his own lips; yet he appears to the world a devout adorer of him.”—*This charge, in every part, I deny.* From Mr. Adams’s character, as portrayed in this Review, every impartial reader will see that his accusations can derive no credit from his assertions; that he is capable of making the grossest misrepresentations; and from detached facts, and often from bare suspicions, of drawing unwarrantable inferences, if suited to his purposes at the moment. Some such facts, relating to Washington, he may have heard me mention, though I have no recollection of it; for those, to which I here refer, were such as entered into occasional conversations between myself and my friends. But whatever they were, the inference of “contempt” is all his own; and perfectly natural, because corresponding with own feelings; as in the instance of which his friend Cunningham reminds him, in his letter No. LX, January 15, 1810, saying, “In the letter, from which I have extracted, you observed, that the portrait of *Washington* ought not to shove aside the portraits of *John Hancock* and *Samuel Adams*, in Faneuil Hall. Now, to say nothing of *Samuel Adams*, what was *John Hancock*? I will tell you what you yourself once said of him. In the afternoon of a day in the summer of 1791, some conversation respecting him led Mrs. Adams to remark, that he was born near your residence—you turned yourself towards your front door, and pointing to a spot in view, you laughingly exclaimed, ‘Yes! there’s the place where the great Governor Hancock was born.’ Then, composing your countenance, and rolling your eye, you went on with these exclamations—‘*John Hancock!* a man without head and without heart—the mere shadow of a man, and yet a Governor of old Massachusetts!’—In his answer to this letter, the next day,

without questioning the truth of Cunningham's statement, Mr. Adams says, "The correspondence and *conversations* which have passed between us have been "under the confidential seal of secrecy and friendship. "Any violation of it will be a breach of honour and of "plighted faith." Other like instances of Mr. Adams's expressed opinion of Washington have come to my knowledge. Yet in official acts, speeches, messages and letters, he was willing to derive to himself some credit as his eulogist.

The "facts" to which I have alluded were military occurrences in the revolutionary war, which fell under my own observation, and which produced an opinion, on some points of his character, in coincidence with what *I know*, from their own observations to me, were the opinions of General Greene and Baron Steuben; with what I have indubitable reason to know was the opinion of Hamilton; and also of Colonel Reed, adjutant general in 1776, and afterwards President of Pennsylvania. To some of these facts and opinions I have occasionally adverted, when I have heard every military enterprise of moment, during the revolutionary war, ascribed exclusively to Washington; and when the salvation of our country and the establishment of its independence have been attributed to him alone. In these unlimited views concerning Washington I have not concurred. I never believed that the effectual defence of our country, and the final achievement of its independence, rested on any one man. Had this been the case, resistance to the mother country would have been madness. Yet I have always thought, and said, that, as the chief command of our armies should be entrusted only to a native citizen, Washington, above all others, was entitled to the preference.

There had been no military school in the Colonies, where natives might learn the art of war; nor any occasion or opportunity for colonists to acquire a practical knowledge of it, excepting in the French or Seven Years' war, which was declared in 1756, and ended in 1763. In that war, numerous Provincial forces were

employed in conjunction with British regular troops: but only for single campaigns, and as militia, engaged to serve from spring to autumn. And all these transient services ended with the conquest of Canada, in 1759 and 60, which gave peace to our frontiers. The frontiers of Virginia, harassed by Indian incursions from 1754, when Washington commanded the levies of that province, were quieted in 1758; in which year, British troops and Colonial militia drove the French from the Ohio. And, at the close of that year, Washington resigned his commission. By his services in that war, he had acquired much military reputation; and his whole life, marked with eminent qualities, left him without a competitor for the chief command, at the commencement of our revolutionary war. Through the whole course of it, he served with a *pure and disinterested zeal, fortitude and magnanimity, that were never surpassed in any cause; and amidst difficulties and discouragements that perhaps were never equalled.* Such a character no one could view with "contempt." In what, then, have I differed from any others, in regard to Washington? I frankly answer—that I did not ascribe to him transcendent talents as well as transcendent virtues. These, combined, would constitute a character that has rarely if ever existed. Washington, far from assuming, uniformly disclaimed it; both when he accepted the Command of the Army in 1775, and when he received the Presidency of the United States in 1789. In these two great acts, deliberately contemplated, and performed with the deepest anxiety, it was manifested, that the highest public employments not being with him objects of ambition, he relinquished the pursuits and endearments of private life, purely in obedience to the voice of his country, to whose service all his faculties were ever devoted. With such feelings, and a painful apprehension of the great responsibility attached to those offices, to accept of them raised still higher his character of exalted patriotism. He consented to hazard his reputation, at momentous crises, when his numerous judicious friends, on whose fidelity and cor-



rect opinions he had just reason to rely, assured him that the public voice, as well as the public welfare, demanded the sacrifice of all private considerations.

My general views of Washington's character coincide with those of some who had frequent and intimate opportunities of knowing it, and of some of our most judicious public writers. Among all the cotemporaries of Washington, no man had more or better (I may say no one had equal) opportunities of knowing Washington, than Alexander Hamilton; and I presume it will be admitted, that no man was more competent to form a correct judgment of his character. For more than four years, Hamilton was an important member of General Washington's military family, in the revolutionary war; and six years Secretary of the Treasury, when Washington was President of the United States; and his constant correspondent during the rest of his life. Hamilton was too just to detract, and too sincere to flatter. In his well known letter on the public conduct and character of John Adams, he mentions "the incomparably superior weight and transcendent popularity of General Washington"—"the venerated Washington"—"the modest and sage Washington"—"the virtuous and circumspect Washington"—"the dead patriot and hero, the admired and beloved Washington." In the same letter, contrasting the precipitation of President Adams with the deliberate judgment of Washington, he says of the latter, "He consulted much, pondered much, resolved slowly, resolved surely." And in his letter, consequent on his resignation of the treasury department, in answer to a "very kind" one from Washington, Hamilton says, "I entreat you to be persuaded (not the less for my having been sparing of professions) that I shall never cease to render a just tribute to those eminent and excellent qualities which have been already productive of so many blessings to your country."\*

I will close my observations respecting Washington with the opinion of that well informed and judicious

\* Marshall's Life of Washington, vol. v, appendix, p. 23.



historian, the late Dr. David Ramsay. In his history of the American Revolution, he writes thus of Washington: "Possessed of a large proportion of common sense directed by a sound judgment, he was better fitted for the exalted station to which he was called, than many others who to greater brilliancy of parts frequently add the eccentricity of original genius."— "His soul, superiour to party spirit, to prejudice and illiberal views, moved according to the impulses it received from an honest heart, a good understanding, common sense, and a sound judgment."\*

To the correctness of these views of Washington's character, by Hamilton and Ramsay, I give my cordial assent; while I deny the other part of Mr. Adams's assertion, that "I appeared to the world a devout adorer of him." In truth, I never adored any man; I never flattered any man; and I never attempted to appear what I was not; choosing rather to hazard giving offence, than to practise any sort of prevarication.

In the same letter, No. XVII, and immediately following the preceding charge, Mr. Adams says of me, "No man was a more animated advocate for the French; yet now he is as zealous for the English." As to the former, at the commencement of their revolution, my sentiments corresponded with those of my fellow-citizens generally; rejoicing in the prospect of their establishing a free government, in the place of an unlimited monarchy. To this sentiment there were very few exceptions in the United States. But, in the progress of the revolution, the unexampled atrocities committed at Paris and in other parts of France excited my abhorrence. When at length order was restored, and a republican government was formed, with "checks and balances" which authorized a hope of its permanent establishment, I again rejoiced. But when this new government swerved from republican principles; when its acts were a continued and extensive exhibition of tyranny, injustice and corruption; and especially when these evil dispositions were manifested in

unexampled injuries and insults towards the United States and their government, the French Rulers, and those who executed their commands, were to me objects of horror and detestation. The honour, under these circumstances, of having continued to cherish French attachments, I cheerfully leave to those who were ambitious of it, and to their new adherents.

With regard to the English, my opposition to their claims, during our controversies with their government, and in the war which succeeded, was constant and uniform. When our independence was established, and peace proclaimed, my enmity ceased. To indulge the sentiment in the declaration of independence, "to hold them, as we should hold the rest of mankind, *Enemies in War—in Peace, Friends*"—accorded as well with my inclination as my duty. Without such a temper among the people of any country, and especially in its rulers, permanent peace cannot be expected. Mr. Adams, in his public letters, takes credit to himself as a friend to peace; and, with some ostentation, repeats, as if it were a maxim peculiar to himself, or at least not common, that he always held a state of *neutrality* to be the true policy and the great interest of the United States; yet in various places he utters sentiments tending to engender hostilities with England. Such, no doubt, appeared to him to be the prevalent feeling of his old opponents, the adherents of Mr. Jefferson, with whom he and his son had coalesced. In his letter No. XXVI, February 11, 1809, to Cunningham, he pronounces "Great-Britain to be the natural enemy of the United States." Yet our commercial intercourse with that country is of greater interest to the United States than that with any other country on the globe. It was that intercourse which rapidly enriched our southern and western states, the growers of cotton; and it will continue to add to their wealth and comforts, if not interrupted or embarrassed by our own impolitic restraints. But its benefits are not confined to the cotton-growing states; they extend to every state in the Union. A new reason now urges the Uni-

ted States to maintain a friendly connexion with Great-Britain: Hers is the only free and independent country in Europe; and Ours the only other country in the World in a condition to co-operate with Britain in sustaining the cause of liberty on the Earth.

If for entertaining such sentiments as these I shall be visited with reproaches, let them come—I am willing to bear them.

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### CONCLUSION.

MANY have exclaimed with horror at the breach of faith which has brought to light the CORRESPONDENCE between Mr. Adams and his friend Cunningham; and they concentrate their reproaches on the head of the son who has given it to the public. But what is the real cause of all this horror? Suppose another person had communicated to Cunningham, ingenious dissertations in philosophy, in morals, or in religion, or the animated effusions of a heart warmed with benevolence, but which the modest and retiring author would venture to impart only to a bosom friend, and especially not to be made public during the writer's life; and suppose this friend struck with the beauties and excellencies of the compositions, and convinced of their utility, if made known; would the disclosure of them, by the anticipation of a few years, be thought an unpardonable crime? On the contrary, would it not be deemed a very venial fault? Who would have regretted the opportunity, thus afforded, to bestow on the modes' author *present* instead of *posthumous* praise, which all would pronounce his due, and which even he, now entirely satisfied of the merit of his work, could himself enjoy?

But what is the character of the "CORRESPONDENCE?"—An exhibition of the worst passions of the human heart.

To the horror-struck censors of the publisher I would say, You think only of the once high standing of Mr. Adams; you see him venerable in years; you read his name associated with some of the most interesting periods of our history, and at length honoured with the highest office our national institutions will admit. All these recollections rush upon the mind, and you are unwilling to loosen the hold they have on your heart. If it were possible, you would shut your eyes against the atrocious calumnies flowing through his pen, and so deeply derogating from the character you have been accustomed to contemplate with delight, and to which you have rendered the grateful homage of your hearts. You are shocked with this new view of his character; but, at the same time, mortified and vexed at the discovery, you pass by the real offender, and pour all your resentment, and expressions of accumulated horror, on the head of the person who has published, *a little prematurely*, the monstrous calumnies which the venerable author had himself prepared for the press. It will be seen, by the note hereto subjoined, that these letters were in truth intended as the posthumous work of President Adams; and the publisher has done no more than to anticipate, by perhaps a year or two, its publication; thereby giving me, what the writer intended to prevent, the opportunity of defending myself during the joint lives of us both.\*

I have now brought to a close my Review of the CORRESPONDENCE between Mr. Adams and his relative and friend William Cunningham. In my own defence I have been constrained to examine freely his communications. If faults of a deep die appear, let it be considered, that I only write their history; and, upon the

\* Mr. Adams commenced his reproaches against me in his letter of Oct. 15, 1803, but enjoined secrecy, in these words: "What I have said is to remain in your own breast. I have no disposition to enter into newspaper controversies with Pickering, or his friends or editors." In his next letter, Nov. 7, he qualifies his injunction: "I shall insist that whatever I write to you upon the subject shall be confidential *as long as I live*." Mr. Adams then proceeds to give full scope to his malevolence, and continues to vent his calumnies until the 7th of June, 1809—a period of seven months; *certainly* with the expectation and *design*, that *after his death they should be made public—to illustrate his own character—and to doom mine to perpetual infamy.*



strictest scrutiny of what I have written, I have discerned no errors. Should any be discovered, I shall readily acknowledge and retract them. Some persons may regret this exhibition of the character of Mr. Adams. Such kind hearts should rather wish that he had not himself *created* the occasion, and rendered it an imperious duty to myself and children, to my friends and to truth, to vindicate my reputation so wantonly assailed. In performing this just act of self defence, it was impossible to avoid the exhibition I have made of the character of the accuser. If I thus expose his faults to the *world*, I at the same time expose them to *himself*; in which view, it may be a work of real usefulness. It may excite just reflections: he may become sensible that he has too long given the reins to his unhallowed passions. With such a temper, and so indulged, will he, on this exposure, have no compunctious feelings? Whatever censure may rest on the publisher of the Correspondence, a heavier censure must fall on him who furnished the matter for the publication. It is, as I have remarked, *this matter, black with every evil passion, which has excited horror*. It is the *author*, rioting on the characters of the men whom he sacrificed to those passions, that ought to be the real source of horror. Should he be shocked, by this exhibition of his own work, it may produce humility and contrition—Christian virtues, and the indispensable conditions of forgiveness at that Tribunal where the specious but empty pardon of any fellow mortal will be of no avail. For myself, wronged as I have been by Mr. Adams, I ask nothing at his hands. I am now alike indifferent to his praise and his reproach. To me, he is an object not of resentment, but of pity.

## APPENDIX.

*Extracts from the pamphlet called "The Prospect Before Us," exhibiting some of the calumnies against Presidents Washington and Adams, by James Thompson Callender ; referred to in page 13.*

"I now return to the tremor of 1787, by which the 'government of your own choice,' the federal constitution, was crammed down the gullet of America."\*

"By his own account, therefore, Mr. Washington has been twice a traitor. He first renounced the king of England, and thereafter the old confederation."

"The extravagant popularity possessed by this citizen † reflects the utmost ridicule on the discernment of America. He approved of the funding system, the assumption, the national bank ; and, in contradiction to his own solemn promise, he authorized the robbery and ruin of the remnants of his own army."

"Under the old confederation, matters never were, nor could have been, conducted so wretchedly as they actually are and have been under the successive monarchs of Braintree and Mount Vernon."‡

"Mr. Washington was president of this federal convention : of course he could not plead ignorance of its intention against the erection of a national bank. He swore to support the constitution. Directly after, he ratified the bank law, which drove the ploughshare of paper jobbing through the very midst of his double oath, as a federal citizen, and as president."

"For all this confusion and iniquity, we must thank Mr. Washington."

"If Mr. Washington wanted to corrupt the American judges, he could not have taken a more decisive step, than by the appointment of Mr. Jay."

"The proclamation of neutrality does not, therefore, deserve that title. It was a proclamation of ignorance and pusillanimity."

"Adams and Washington have since been shaping a series of these paper-jobbers into judges and ambassadors. As their whole courage lies in want of shame, these poltroons, without risking a manly and intelligible defence of their own measures, raise an affected yelp against the corruption of the French directory ; as if any corruption could be more venal, more notorious, more execrated, than their own."

\* If the reader will turn back to pages 33 and 34, he will see Mr. Jefferson's reproachful censures of the constitution, and of the eminent patriots who formed it.

† Washington.

‡ Meaning Adams and Washington. The township of Quincy, the place of Mr. Adams's residence, was formerly a part of the township of Braintree.

For years together, the United States resounded with curses against them, while the grand lama of federal adoration, the immaculate divinity of Mount Vernon, approved of and subscribed every one of their blackest measures."

"This speech has a charm that completely unmasks the scandalous hypocrisy of Washington."

"Mr. Adams has only completed the scene of ignominy which Mr. Washington began."

"Foremost in whatever is detestable, Mr. Adams feels anxiety to curb the frontier population."

"This last presidential felony will be buried by Congress in the same criminal silence as its predecessors."

"In the two first years of his presidency, he has contrived pretences to double the annual expense of government, by useless fleets, armies, sinecures, and jobs of every possible description."

"By sending these ambassadors to Paris, Mr. Adams and his British faction designed to do nothing but mischief."

"It is happy for Mr. Adams himself, as well as for his country, that he asserted an untruth."

"In the midst of such a scene of profligacy and of usury, the President has persisted, as long as he durst, in making his utmost efforts for provoking a French war."

"When a chief magistrate is, both in his speeches and in his newspapers, constantly reviling France, he can neither expect nor desire to live long in peace with her. Take your choice, then, between Adams, war and beggary, and Jefferson, peace and competency."

Such are some of the calumnies (the "Prospect before Us" contains many more) written and published by James Thompson Callender, in 1800, when the election of a president was pending, Adams and Jefferson being the rival candidates; and such the character of the "book Callender was about to publish," which Mr. Jefferson said, would "inform the thinking part of the nation," and enable these "to set the people to rights."

*Letter from Mr. Jefferson to Lieutenant Governor Barry of Kentucky, on the Judiciary. Page 16.*

"MONTICELLO, JULY 2, 1822.

"SIR—Your favour of the 15th June is received, and I am very thankful for the kindness of its expressions respecting myself; but it ascribes to me merits which I do not claim. I was one only of a band devoted to the cause of independence, all of whom exerted equally their best endeavours for its success, and have a common right to the merits of its acquisition. So also in the civil revolution of 1801, very many and very meritorious were the worthy patriots who assisted in bringing back our government to its republican track. To preserve it in that, will require unremitting vigilance. Whether the surrender of our opponents, their reception into our camp, their as-

sumption of our name, and apparent accession to our objects, may strengthen or weaken the genuine principles of republicanism, may be a good or an evil, is yet to be seen. I consider the party division of whig and tory the most wholesome which can exist in any government, and well worthy of being nourished, to keep out those of a more dangerous character. We already see the power, installed for life, responsible to no authority (for impeachment is not even a scare-crow) advancing with a noiseless and steady pace to the great object of consolidation; the foundations are deeply laid, by their decisions, for the annihilation of constitutional state rights, and the removal of every check, every counterpoise, to the ingulfing power of which themselves are to make a sovereign part. If ever this vast country is brought under a single government, it will be one of the most extensive corruption, indifferent to, and incapable of a wholesome care over so wide a spread of surface. This will not be borne, and you will have to choose between reformation and revolution. If I know the spirit of this country, the one or the other is inevitable. Before the canker is become inveterate, before its venom has reached so much of the body politic as to get beyond controul, remedy should be applied. Let the future appointments of judges be for four or six years, and renewable by the President and Senate. This will bring their conduct, at regular periods, under revision and probation, and may keep them in equipoise between the general and special governments. We have erred in this point by copying England, where certainly it is a good thing to have the judges independent of the king; but we have omitted to copy their caution also, which makes a judge removable on the address of both legislative houses. That there should be public functionaries independent of the nation, whatever may be their merit, is a solecism in a republic, of the first order of absurdity and inconsistency.

TH. JEFFERSON."

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NOTE B. PAGE 24.

It is forty years since Mr. Jefferson wrote his "Notes on Virginia." In that small volume, (I believe his only work, unless his manual of parliamentary usages be viewed as another) besides answering various questions of a foreigner of distinction, about facts concerning that State, and which Mr. Jefferson's local knowledge and public employments in the district of country which gave him birth, enabled him to answer, he exhibited other facts, to detect the gross errors of some European philosophers, who, for want of due inquiry, had stated, that the various races of animals, and man himself, in the New World, compared with those of the Old World, were greatly inferior in size; and man also in intellect; or, to use Mr. Jefferson's own word, were "belittled." To overthrow this unfounded opinion, and triumphantly, was surely not a difficult task. The various tribes of untutored Indians, with whom the English colonists had frequent intercourse, had given decisive proofs of eminent intellectual powers,



and of a natural eloquence which astonished their hearers. Governor Colden, of New-York, in his history of the Iroquois, or Five Nations, published in London in 1747, gave many specimens of the abilities and eloquence of their chiefs. Mr. Jefferson, in his "Notes," furnished the like evidence in the speech of Logan. The late Col. John Gibson, who served in the war of our revolution, and whose last office, if I mistake not, was that of Secretary of the Territory (now State) of Indiana, informed me, that he was the interpreter of Logan's eloquent speech, above mentioned.

After the decease of Mr. Rittenhouse, President of the American Philosophical Society, established at Philadelphia, Mr. Jefferson was elected to that office. But no communications, literary or philosophical, from him, appear among their subsequent transactions.

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NOTE C. PAGE 25.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH MR. ADAMS.

*Extracts from a letter, dated August 2, 1822, from T. Pickering to John Adams, formerly President of the United States.*

"As no act of the Congress of the Thirteen United American Colonies was so distinguished as that by which their independence of Great-Britain was declared, the most particular history of that transaction will probably be sought for, not merely as an interesting curiosity, but to do substantial justice to the abilities and energy of the leaders in that great measure."

"By the public journals, it appears, that on the 7th of June 1776 'certain resolutions respecting independency were moved and seconded'; and that on the 10th, the first resolution, 'that the United Colonies are and of right ought to be free and Independent States,' was adopted; and the next day the committee for preparing the declaration to that effect was chosen, consisting of 'Mr. Jefferson, Mr. J. Adams, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Sherman and Mr. R. R. Livingston.' Mr. Jefferson, being first on the list, became the chairman."

"It was in the natural order of proceeding for the committee to meet and discuss the subject; and, after mature deliberation, to decide on the principles or propositions which should constitute the basis of the declaration; and to refer the making of the draught to the chairman, or to a sub-committee."

"Some years ago, a copy of the declaration, as reported to Congress, was put into my hands, by some one of the Lee family. It was in Mr. Jefferson's hand-writing, and enclosed in a short letter from him to R. H. Lee, together with a copy of the declaration as amended in Congress. The amendments consisted chiefly in striking out; and about one fourth part of the whole was struck out."—"To me, the alterations made in Congress seemed important and substantial amendments."—"After all, the declaration does not contain many new ideas. It is rather a compilation of facts and senti-

ments stated and expressed, during the preceding eleven years, by those who wrote and vindicated the rights of the Colonies, including the proceedings of the Congress of 1774 ; that is, from the year of the stamp act to the commencement of the war. The great merit of any compilation consists in the lucid and forcible arrangement of the matter. The reported declaration was evidently enfeebled by its redundancies."—"I have thought it desirable that the facts in this case should be ascertained. You alone can give a full statement of them, to be communicated to whom you think proper. To arrive at *truth*, and to assure to every one his just portion of applause, are the sole objects of these remarks."

On the 6th of August Mr. Adams favoured me with an answer ; and was pleased to communicate to me his short history of the Declaration of Independence, as it appears in the following extract from his letter of that date.

"Mr. Jefferson came into Congress in June 1775, and brought with him a reputation for literature, science, and a happy talent at composition. Writings of his were handed about, remarkable for the peculiar felicity of expression. Though a silent member in Congress, he was so prompt, frank, explicit and decisive upon committees, not even Samuel Adams was more so, that he soon seized upon my heart ; and upon this occasion I gave him my vote, and did all in my power to procure the votes of others. I think he had one more vote than any other, and that placed him at the head of the committee. I had the next highest number, and that placed me the second. The committee met, discussed the subject, and then appointed Mr. Jefferson and me to make the draught ; I suppose, because we were the two highest on the list. The sub-committee met. Jefferson proposed to me to make the draught. I said, I will not, you shall do it." [Then follows an amicable altercation on this point ; but Mr. Adams persisting in his refusal to make the draught,] "Well," said Jefferson, "if you are decided, I will do as well as I can." Very well ; when you have drawn it up we will have a meeting. A meeting we accordingly had, and conned the paper over. I was delighted with its high tone, and the flights of oratory with which it abounded, especially that concerning Negro Slavery, which, though I knew his Southern Brethren would never suffer to pass in Congress, I certainly never would oppose. There were other expressions which I would not have inserted if I had drawn it up ; particularly that which called the King a Tyrant. I thought this too personal ; for I never believed George to be a tyrant in disposition and in nature : I always believed him to be deceived by his courtiers on both sides the Atlantic, and in his official capacity only cruel."

"I thought the expression too passionate and too much like scolding for so grave and solemn a document ; but as Franklin and Sherman were to inspect it afterwards, I thought it would not become me to strike it out. I consented to report it ; and do not now remember that I made or suggested a single alteration. We reported it to the Committee of Five. It was read ; and I do not remember that

Franklin or Sherman criticised any thing. We were all in haste ; Congress was impatient ; and the instrument was reported, as I believe, in Jefferson's hand-writing, as he first drew it. Congress cut off about a quarter part of it, as I expected they would ; but they obliterated some of the best of it, and left all that was exceptionable, if any thing in it was. I have long wondered that the original draught has not been published. I suppose the reason is, the vehement Philippic against Negro Slavery. As you justly observe, there is not an idea in it but what had been hackneyed in Congress for two years before. The substance of it is contained in the declaration of rights and the violation of those rights, in the Journals of Congress in 1774. Indeed the essence of it is contained in a pamphlet voted and printed by the town of Boston before the first Congress met ; composed by James Otis, as I suppose, in one of his lucid intervals, and pruned and polished by Samuel Adams."

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NOTE D. PAGE 25.

*Mr. Jefferson's Draught of the Declaration of Independence. This is placed in the left-hand column ; and the Declaration, as amended and adopted by Congress, in the right hand column, of each page, for the convenience of comparing them.*

Mr. Jefferson's Draught, as reported by the Committee to Congress.

The Declaration, as amended and adopted by Congress.

A Declaration by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA in General Congress assembled.

A DECLARATION by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in Congress assembled.

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

*This paragraph of the draught remained unaltered.*

We hold these truths to be self-evident ; that all men are created equal ; that they are endowed by their Creator with inherent and inalienable rights ; that among these are life, liberty and

We hold these truths to be self-evident ; that all men are created equal ; that they are endowed, by their Creator, with certain unalienable rights ; that among these are life, liberty, and the

## Mr. Jefferson's Draught.

the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. prudence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes. and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. but when a long train of abuses and usurpations, begun at a distinguished period, and pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to expunge their former systems of government. the history of the present king of Great Britain, is a history of unremitting injuries and usurpations, among which appears no solitary fact to contradict the uniform tenor of the rest; but all have in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. to prove this let facts be submitted to a candid world, for the truth of which we

## Declaration as adopted.

pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate, that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having, in direct object, the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.



Mr. Jefferson's Draught.

Declaration as adopted.

pledge a faith yet unsullied by falsehood.

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

he has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained ; and when so suspended, he has neglected utterly to attend to them.

he has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature ; a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

he has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

he has dissolved Representative houses repeatedly and continually, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

he has refused for a long time after such dissolutions to cause others to be elected, whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise, the state remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without and convulsions within.

he has endeavoured to prevent the population of these states ; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners ; refusing to pass oth-

*Not altered.*

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained ; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

*Not altered.*

*Not altered.*

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

*Not altered.*

*Not altered.*

Mr. Jefferson's Draught.

Declaration as adopted.

ers to encourage their migration hither; and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

he has suffered the administration of justice totally to cease in some of these states, refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

he has made our judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices and the amount and payment of their salaries.

he has erected a multitude of new offices by a self-assumed power, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people, and to eat out their substance.

he has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies and ships of war, without the consent of our legislatures.

he has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to the civil power.

he has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitutions and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation

for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

for protecting them by a mock trial from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states;

for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

for imposing taxes on us without our consent;

for depriving us of the benefits of trial by jury;

for transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences;

for abolishing the free system of

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures.

*Not altered.*

He has combined with others, to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation,

*Not altered.*

for depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury;

*Not altered.*

for abolishing the free system

## Mr. Jefferson's Draught.

English laws in a neighbouring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging it's boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these states ;

for taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments ;

for suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever ;

he has abdicated government here, withdrawing his governors, and declaring us out of his allegiance and protection.

he has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people. he is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries, to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

he has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions of existence.

he has incited treasonable insurrections of our fellow citizens, with the allurements of forfeiture and confiscation of our property.

he has constrained others, taken captives on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the execution-

## Declaration as adopted.

of English laws in a neighbouring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it, at once, an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies ;

*Not altered.*

*Not altered.*

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is, at this time, transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction, of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

Mr. Jefferson's Draught.

Declaration as adopted.

ers of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

he has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating it's most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people, who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. this piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of a *Christian* king of Great Britain. determined to keep open a market where MEN should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. and that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which *he* has deprived them, by murdering the people upon whom *he* also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the *liberties* of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the *lives* of another.

In every stage of these oppressions, we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. a prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a people who mean to be free. future ages will scarce believe

*Struck out.*

In every stage of these oppressions, we have petitioned for redress, in the most humble terms: our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.



that the hardiness of one man adventured, within the short compass of twelve years only, to build a foundation so broad and undisguised, for tyranny over a people fostered and fixed in principles of freedom.

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. we have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend a jurisdiction over these our states. we have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here, no one of which could warrant so strange a pretension: that these were effected at the expence of our own blood and treasure, unassisted by the wealth or the strength of Great Britain: that in constituting indeed our several forms of government, we had adopted one common king, thereby laying a foundation for perpetual league and amity with them: but that submission to their parliament was no part of our constitution, nor even in idea, if history may be credited: and we appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, as well as to the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which were likely to interrupt our connection and correspondence. they too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity; and when occasions have been given them by the regular course of their laws, of removing from their councils the disturbers of our harmony, they have by their free election re-established them in power. at this very time too, they are permitting their chief magistrate to send over not only soldiers of our common blood, but Scotch and foreign mercenaries to invade and

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren: We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts by their legislature, to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

Mr. Jefferson's Draught.

Declaration as adopted.

destroy us. these facts have given the last stab to agonizing affection; and manly spirit bids us to renounce forever these unfeeling brethren. we must endeavour to forget our former love for them, and to hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends. we might have been a free and a great people together; but a communication of grandeur and of freedom, it seems is below their dignity. be it so, since they will have it. the road to happiness and to glory is open to us too; we will climb it apart from them, and acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our eternal separation!

We therefore the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, do, in the name, and by authority of the good people of these states, reject and renounce all allegiance and subjection to the kings of Great Britain, and all others who may hereafter claim by, through, or under them; we utterly dissolve all political connection which may heretofore have subsisted between us and the parliament or people of Great Britain; and finally we do assert these colonies to be free and independent states, and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. and for the support of this declaration, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES of AMERICA, in GENERAL CONGRESS assembled, appealing to the supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE and INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as FREE and INDEPENDENT STATES, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do. And, for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of DIVINE PROVIDENCE, we mutually pledge to each other, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour.

Mr. Jefferson was manifestly displeased with the alterations made in Congress, in his Draught of the Declaration. In his letter of July 8, 1776, to Richard Henry Lee, he says, "I enclose you a copy of the Declaration of Independence as agreed to by the house, and also as originally framed. you will judge whether it is the better or worse for the critics."—Far from being "worse," I think unprejudiced readers will pronounce the alterations and amendments, made by the "critics" in Congress, substantial improvements; and that to those "critics" Mr. Jefferson is indebted for much of the applause which has been bestowed upon him as the AUTHOR of the Declaration.

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NOTE E.

Fifteen millions of dollars were the stipulated price for Louisiana; not an immoderate sum for so extensive a territory. But *under the circumstances I have stated*, it will not be deemed a wild conjecture, that for the round sum of ten millions, the same object might have been accomplished.

Supplies of provisions and of other articles had been furnished by American merchants to the French Government, through the Agents of France and her Colonies, for which payments had not been made. Those merchants had also sustained great damages by a wanton or heedless embargo of their vessels in the ports of France. For these supplies and damages, our merchants were entitled to payments and indemnities. For these purposes, and for certain captures, three millions and three quarters of a million of the fifteen millions of dollars were appropriated. The captures, or prizes, were those only which on the 30th of September, 1800, had not been definitively condemned. This is the date of the treaty negotiated by President Adams's ministers, Ellsworth, Davie and Murray. The claims for other prizes, to the estimated amount of twenty millions of dollars, prior to that date, were by the same treaty abandoned.

In arranging the Louisiana business, three instruments in writing were employed. One was denominated a treaty, by which Bonaparte, then First Consul of France, ceded to the United States the Province of Louisiana. By the second, called a convention, the United States stipulated to create six per cent stock, to the amount of eleven millions and two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, to be delivered to the French Government, or its agent. By the third instrument, also called a convention, the examination and ascertainment of the aforementioned debts and claims of American citizens, were provided for; and an American Board was constituted for that purpose. As France had no interest therein,—all the liquidated claims being to be paid out of the treasury of the United States, from the appropriated fund of three millions, seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars,—the examination and adjustment of the claims ought to have been made by American authority exclusively, without the contaminating interfer-

ence of a French Bureau. But instead of this, express provision was made for such interference. The consequence was, the further plunder of American merchants; who, to obtain three fourths of their honest dues, were obliged respectively to sacrifice the other fourth in gratifications to the French Bureau. Such was the information I received in the midst of these transactions.\* It might have been expected, from the high reputation of the late Chancellor Robert R. Livingston, as a statesman and a lawyer, that he would have taken care to guard the American merchants against the mischief here stated. He, undoubtedly, was the *Principal* in negotiating the Louisiana treaty and conventions. As the resident minister plenipotentiary of the United States at Paris, he could not have been unacquainted with the general character of the persons administering the French Government, and their train of under officers, against whose impositions the clearest and strongest guards were necessary.

\* It is probable that divers honest claims were rejected by the French Bureau. A Boston merchant (an old friend of mine) informed me, that he had two claims—one for five thousand dollars, and another for fifty thousand dollars, both equally well founded. The small claim was allowed, and the large one rejected. His agent had not been authorized to give the twenty five per cent. gratification to the French Bureau. The rejection of such claims made room for others unfounded, for which higher gratifications may have been given.

















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